



Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Date: MONDAY, 7 JULY 2014
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM 2, WEST WING, GUILDHALL.

Members: Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)
George Abrahams (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg
Deputy John Barker
Alderman Jeffrey Evans
Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Barbara Newman
Virginia Rounding
Ian Seaton
Sylvia Moys
Deputy Alex Deane (Ex-officio)
Alderman Ian Luder (Ex-officio)

For consideration of Business Relating to Epping Forest Only

Verderer Peter Adams
Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Verderer Richard Morris
Verderer Dr. Joanna Thomas

Enquiries: **Natasha Dogra**
Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at the rising of the Committee

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Agenda

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

3. **MINUTES**

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 12)

Epping Forest

4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

To receive a verbal update from the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Information

5. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2013/14 - EPPING FOREST**

Report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces.

For Information
(Pages 13 - 18)

6. **UPDATE ON THE EPPING FOREST VISITOR SURVEY**

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Decision
(Pages 19 - 60)

7. **EPPING FOREST PLANNING CASEWORK - 2013/14**

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Information
(Pages 61 - 70)

8. WHIPPS CROSS ROUNDABOUT HIGHWAY DEDICATION SCHEME

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Information
(Pages 71 - 80)

9. ANNUAL REPORT OF LICENCES ISSUED 1 APRIL 2013 TO 31 MARCH 2014

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Information
(Pages 81 - 86)

10. VOLUNTEERING IN EPPING FOREST 2013/14

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Information
(Pages 87 - 92)

11. ANNUAL REPORT OF FLY TIPPING AND WASTE DISPOSAL 1 APRIL 2013 TO 31 MARCH 2014

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Information
(Pages 93 - 98)

12. EPPING FOREST FOOTBALL CHARGES 2014/15

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Decision
(Pages 99 - 104)

Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common & City Commons

13. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

To receive an update from the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons.

For Information

14. REVENUE OUTTURN 2013/14 - BURNHAM BEECHES, STOKE COMMON & CITY COMMONS

Report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces.

For Information
(Pages 105 - 108)

15. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act

For Decision

18. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 109 - 112)

19. EPPING FOREST CAR PARKING - POLICY AND STRATEGY

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Decision
(Pages 113 - 126)

20. RENT REVIEW 2013

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Decision
(Pages 127 - 130)

21. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

22. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE
Monday, 12 May 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 12 May 2014 at
11.00 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)
George Abrahams (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy John Barker
Alderman Jeffrey Evans
Alderman Ian Luder
Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Barbara Newman
Virginia Rounding
Verderer Peter Adams
Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Verderer Richard Morris
Verderer Dr. Joanna Thomas
Sylvia Moys

Officers:

Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Department
Sue Ireland	- Director, Open Spaces
Paul Thomson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Andy Barnard	- Superintendent, Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common & City Commons
Jo Hurst	- Business Manager, Epping Forest
Sam Cook	- Remembrancer's Department
Bob Meldrum	- Assistant Director, Surveyors
Alison Hurley	- Assistant Director, Surveyors
Roger Adams	- Senior Principal Surveyor
Julian Kverndal	- Senior Historic Building Surveyor

1. **APOLOGIES**
Apologies had been received from Deputy Ginsburg and Ian Seaton.
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
There were no declarations.
3. **ORDER OF COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**
Received.
4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. A list of Members eligible to stand was read and Alderman Gordon Haines being the only Member expressing a willingness to serve was declared to have been elected as Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30. A list of Members eligible to stand was read and George Abrahams being the only Member expressing a willingness to serve was declared to have been elected as Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the ensuing year.

The Committee extended their thanks to Deputy Ginsburg for the work he undertook during his year as Deputy Chairman.

6. **EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS 2014/15**

The Committee received the report of the Town Clerk and were asked to consider its appointments for the next twelve months. Members were reminded of the current membership of the various Sub Committees, Consultative Committees, Steering Groups and Management Project.

RESOLVED – That the Membership of Sub Committees be agreed as follows:

Epping Forest Reference Sub Committee

Alderman Haines
George Abrahams
Deputy Barker
Deputy McGuinness
Alderman Evans
Sylvia Moys
Barbara Newman
Virginia Rounding
Two Verderers

Ashted Commons Consultative Committee

Alderman Haines
George Abrahams
Sylvia Moys
Barbara Newman
1 Vacancy

Burnham Beeches Consultative Committee

Alderman Haines
George Abrahams
Sylvia Moys
Barbara Newman

Couldson Common Consultative Committee

Alderman Haines

George Abrahams
Verderer Adams
Sylvia Moys
Barbara Newman

West Wickham Commons Consultative Committee

Alderman Haines
George Abrahams
Verderer Adams
Sylvia Moys
Barbara Newman

Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee

Alderman Haines
George Abrahams
Verderer Adams
Verderer Morris
Deputy McGuinness

Epping Forest Management Plan Steering Group

Alderman Haines
George Abrahams
Verderer Adams
Sylvia Moys
Deputy McGuinness
Verderer Thomas
Verderer Chapman
1 Vacancy

Wanstead Flats Playing Fields Committee

Alderman Haines
George Abrahams
Verderer Thomas
Verderer Adams

Opens Spaces & City Gardens Committee representative

Verderer Adams

7. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record with the following revision.

A Member enquired why the Horse Riding Licence had not been increased since its introduction in 2003. Officers indicated that the charge would be considered for increase following forthcoming public consultation in the Epping Forest Management Plan.

The action at item 6 – Enforcement of Epping Forest Byelaws regarding additional information between ordinary conversations with the public and advisory conversations would be addressed in the next report on the subject.

8. **BURNHAM BEECHES CONSULTATION GROUP MINUTES OF 2ND APRIL 2014**

Received.

9. **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014**

The Committee received the report of the Remembrancer which informed the Committee of a legislative change which would allow the Common Council to exercise new powers to tackle anti-social behaviour (including powers relating to the control of dogs) in the City Corporation's open spaces.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 created the Public Spaces Protection Order, which could be used by local authorities to curtail activities which have a detrimental effect on public spaces in their areas. As a result of discussions with the Government, provision was included in the Act to enable the Secretary of State to designate the Common Council and other custodians of open spaces as bodies additionally entitled to make these Orders.

Use of this provision would enable the Common Council to make Public Spaces Protection Orders in the open spaces outside the City. Infringements of the Orders will be criminal offences punishable by a fixed penalty notice of £100, or a fine of £1,000 on summary conviction. The Common Council's power to make Dog Control Orders would cease after the changes come into effect, although existing Dog Control Orders would continue in force for a period of three years.

10. **OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT BUSINESS PLAN 2014-2017**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Open Spaces. The plan outlined the departmental priorities for the forthcoming year, outlined longer term projects and specified how Officers would measure our performance using a range of performance indicators.

The Director advised the Committee that in future the Open Spaces Business Plan report would be considered by the Open Spaces Committee only.

Members expressed concern over the high staff turnover figure quoted in the report and were informed that the figure included seasonal staff. In future, the figure will be disaggregated between planned and unplanned turnover.

Resolved: That Members approved the Open Spaces Department Business Plan for 2014-17

11. **PROVISIONAL ADDITIONAL WORKS PROGRAMME - 2015/16**

The Committee considered the report of the City Surveyor which set out a provisional list of cyclical projects being considered for properties under the management of Epping Forest and Commons Committee under the umbrella of the "additional works programme".

The draft cyclical project list for 2015/16 totalled approximately £0.72m and would continue the ongoing programme in the maintenance of the property and infrastructure assets.

Resolved: That Members endorsed the provisional list of works for 2015/16.

12. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Committee received the following update from the Superintendent of Epping Forest:

Staff changes

The Community Liaison Officer completed his temporary contract term. An Interim Sports Development Coordinator had been appointed to work on current and future season's bookings, together with four casual Information Assistants for 'The View'.

Weather

With an unseasonably warm and dry March and April, the Fire Severity Index for the south of the Forest rose to 4 (Very High) and 3 (high) for the North of the Forest for the last few weeks of April.

Riders Forum – 9th March

A very positive meeting was held on 9th March, with praise for information being disseminated on events and work to open up 7 km of horse rides. Concerns continued to be raised around grid bypass gates; cattle fencing and mounting blocks.

Skylark Initiative

A series of events and new signposting had been delivered in partnership with Wren Conservation and an Animal Behaviourist to draw attention to the problem of disturbance by dogs of ground nesting birds, especially skylarks.

Reservoir Inspection – 17th April

Dr Andy Hughes completed his first inspection of the year. Dr Hughes was again complimentary over the further improvements in dam vegetation maintenance and again emphasised the need for hard landscaping improvements to Baldwins Pond and Birch Hall Park Pond.

Le Tour de France – le Grand Départ – Stage Three

Further meetings were being held with the organisers and Local authorities regarding the stage through Epping Forest, including road closures and viewing opportunities.

Knighton Wood

The recent temporary measures to address Anti-Social Behaviour by restricting public access to the Knighton Wood car park attracted some criticism in the local press. The new car park gate had improved the situation.

Trespass Incidents – Wanstead and Leyton Flats

Fifteen caravans and associated vehicles tried to occupy The Dell on 23rd March and the Old Lido Site on 16th April. On both occasions staff in partnership with the Police and Emergency Planning Officers cleared the site within 3 and 6 hours respectively.

Body Found at Tarzy Wood, Wanstead

A body was discovered by children at Tarzy Wood on 27th April. The individual was thought to have been a Rough Sleeper. A post mortem had been inconclusive.

Break In at The Warren

A series of items including powered machinery were taken during a break in at The Warren yard.

Fly tipping

Fly tipping incidents had risen by 30% (51 incidents) from 170 to 221 for the first 4 months of 2014.

Land Fill Escalator

The Landfill Tax had risen by a further £8 per metric tonne to £80 per metric tonne from April as part of the continuing 'escalator' arrangements. Fly tipping levels appear to be more closely linked with the fortunes of the economy rather than the escalator.

Litter

Littering had proved to be a major talking point over the past 2 months with conversations on Twitter, coverage of Eagle Pond in the local press; and new Forest Keeper/Community initiatives including tidyourflats and a clear up at Davies Lane.

Byelaw Enforcement

Chelmsford Magistrates Court supported 4 cases on fungi picking.

DEFRA Ash-dieback Research

DEFRA had published their most recent assessment of the impact of Ash 'dieback' fungus which suggests around half of all the trees in Essex are expected to be infected by 2018.

Ban on the sale of selected non-native plants

Ahead of a more wide ranging EU regulation on Invasive Alien Species (IAS), DEFRA had banned the sale of five highly invasive water plants from April 2014 including Australian Swamp Stonecrop (also known as New Zealand Pygmy weed) which has extensively damaged over 20 Epping Forest Ponds)

Oxford University Report on extreme rainfall events

A new report indicates that extreme rainfall events expected only once in a century are now likely to be witnessed every eighty years.

Campaign to Protect Rural England report on threats to the Green Belt

CPRE echoed research by the National Trust reported to your Committee on 13th January that Local Planning Authorities were set to undermine the Green Belt in the search for housing allocations.

Highams Park Lake

The London Borough of Waltham Forest provided planning consent for the dam strengthening works on 15th April. Main works were expected to commence in June. The City had now exceeded the 8th April commencement deadline and has kept the Environment Agency apprised of the situation. Site Investigation works started on 17th March. Survey work had revealed that the lake contains 14,000 M3 of silt and a desilting strategy was being developed.

Wanstead Park Hydrology Study

The detailed report by consultants JJA would be available next week. Significant deficits have been observed at Heronry Pond and Ornamental Water and the study would address a strategy for improving water collection and minimising leakage in the catchment

Ornamental Water, Wanstead Park – High Risk Designation

The Environment Agency had advised a provisional designation of High Risk Reservoir for Ornamental Water as part of the risk-based review under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

Goose Control

The Central Forest Keeper Team had completed goose control for the fifth successive year with eggs located declining from 95 in 2010 to 53 in 2014. Geese were inhibiting grassland restoration at Jubilee Pond and the use of a deterrent made from grape by-products was being considered for use to reduce grazing pressure.

M25 Hard Shoulder Scheme

The controversial scheme involving hard shoulder running and refuge bays had commenced construction on the unlit Epping Forest section.

Visitor Survey underway

The 2014 season survey had commenced.

High Beach Visitor Reopening – 5th April

Magnificent work by the Friends of Epping Forest has seen the training of over 20 volunteers who would staff the centre on Fridays and Saturdays. The Centre was declared open by the Chairman and Eleanor Laing MP.

London Borough of Waltham Forest Design Awards

The City of London received commended for the 'best refurbishment of a Heritage Building' category.

Family Learning Events

Over 220 attended each of the Family learning Events on the 19th and 21st February.

Thinkspace Teachers Conference

Epping Forest staff attended a conference designed to help teachers prepare for the new National Curriculum for history.

Orion Harriers Cross Country & Jack Fenn Trophy

The Chairman was guest of honour at the recent Orion Harriers race day.

GLA 'Mini-Holland' Proposals

The London Borough of Waltham Forest has secured a £30M award from the GLA. The centrepiece of the LBWF plan is a Cycle Superhighway Scheme for Lea Bridge Road and a 'Mini-Holland' roundabout on Forest Land at Whippys Cross.

Social Media

Thanks were extended to the hard work of five staff members who maintain Epping Forest's Twitter strategy with the number of followers having passed 2,000 to reach 2,254 at the end of April.

Deer Carving at Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge

Three 1.5x life size carvings by Gloucestershire carver Denius Parson had been installed in the grounds of the Hunting Lodge.

Chingford Golf Course

The Red Rule at the Golf Course was removed on Sport Relief Day, 22nd March. Since its removal play has increased by 28%. The introduction of a new Season Ticket scheme has increased public membership from 10 to 105 registrations. Play at the Course was up 8% across the year.

Outreach

The Community Liaison Officer and Forest Keepers secured involvement on conservation projects from Forest Gate Women's Institute to Newham Woodcraft Folk in the south of the Forest and St John's School in the north.

Volunteers

Recruitment was underway for 2014. Notable projects led by volunteers include clearance to improve bluebell habitat at Chalet Wood, clearance at Earl's Path Pond and scrub clearance at Top Pond, Knighton Wood. Overall 10,884 hours were completed by volunteers in 2013/14.

Epping Forest on Television

An episode – The Curse of the Bronze Lamp - from the detective series 'Jonathan Creek', filmed at Copped Hall, was aired on 14th March. A forthcoming commercial for folding doors was filmed at Rushey Plain on 29th April.

A member observed that the Tour de France passed through Epping Forest on the 7th July, the next Committee date, and requested that the Committee's timing be altered or the proceedings be relocated to The Warren. The Director

noted the travel restrictions in Epping Forest on the day of the race and agreed to review the timing in consultation with the Town Clerks Department.

A member enquired about the proposed changes to the National Curriculum and the implications for the City's Education Strategy. The change away from Tudors and Stuarts, the mainstay of teaching at the Hunting Lodge, was highlighted along with the pre-1066 opportunities, including Epping Forest's Iron Age Camps, presented by the New Curriculum,

13. OUTTURN REPORTS FOR BRANCHING OUT - BUTLERS RETREAT AND THE VIEW

The Committee received the report of the City Surveyor and Director of Open Spaces.

14. HIGHAMS PARK CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the City Surveyor. Members noted that a number of changes had been made to the Highams Park Conservation Management Plan, and a draft had been circulated to the Committee. Discussions ensued regarding the uncostered nature of the plan intervention and the proposals for a public consultation regarding the plan. The Committee were in agreement that a public consultation at this moment would not be very helpful.

In response to a query from Members, Officers clarified that the document was currently on hold pending further discussion at a future date.

Resolved: That Members:

(a) Noted the content of this report and the amended draft Highams Park Conservation Management Plan.

(b) Took cognizance of the content in the report and while progressing the urgent strengthening work on the dam, elsewhere Officers should investigate the restoration of the heritage landscape and the surrounding areas where appropriate and affordable subject to the funding and staff resources available.

15. EPPING FOREST GATEWAY DESIGN

The Committee considered the report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest and noted the design and build of Epping Forest Gateways and associated standardisation of furniture such as signage and benches is part of the Branching Out project. It had been informed by the new graphic designs for Open Spaces.

- Approval is sought for a design concept and materials, which would then be worked up with detailed drawings for the gateways, signage and Forest furniture.

The budget for design and build of a series of Gateways and furniture is £250,000. The exact allocation will depend on the chosen design and materials. The

intention is to install signage within the Branching Out contract by the end of November 2014.

Discussions ensued regarding the inclusion of the City of London Corporation crest and the words "Epping Forest: Registered Charity" on all of the signs, and Officers agreed to investigate this further. Members agreed that all signs should include this wording

Members discussed the possibility of erecting signs along the Tour De France route which could be picked up by the media to advertise Epping Forest and the City Corporation. Whilst road surfaces could not be painted, nor arches erected across the road, Officers agreed to consult with colleagues in the Public Relations Officers regarding possible advertising opportunities.

Resolved: That Members:

- approved the design approach in order for officers to request the contractor to prepare detailed designs.
- agreed that that the decision on the final design be delegated to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.

16. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Committee received the following update from the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons:

New City Commons structure commenced 2nd April

- Two Ranger vacancies had been filled by internal candidates: Livestock Ranger at City Commons and Ranger at Ashted Common
- Personal Assistant post filled by internal candidate
- Recruitment had commenced for a 'City Commons wide' Information Ranger on a temporary contract
- Assistant Ranger post filled by external candidate
- Early retirement of Head Ranger of West Wickham and Spring Park: Support Service Manager post was being considered as direct replacement.
- Temp Admin Assist post contract extended for 6 months – Ashted Common
- Reviews of health and safety procedures, staff rotas and vehicle fleet were programmed for the coming months
- Two vacant posts at City Commons had been put on hold pending SBR decisions
- Assistant Information Ranger recruited at Burnham Beeches

Proposed road crossing A 232 - West Wickham Common.

- A long standing issue for residents with a recent 'near miss' bringing a new focus
- Issue previously brought to member's attention but the issue had not been resolved
- Meeting with TFL who have new proposals – these would require loss of Open Space. New proposals had requested.

- Residents Association AGM in June and would require sensitive handling

Dog Control Orders at Burnham Beeches

- Kennel Club sent another list of queries – response sent and notes would be circulated to Members
- Formal Consultation letters sent to Primary and Secondary Authorities
- Timetable for public, formal consultation had drawn up and would commence post LM visit and by mid-June

Burnham Beeches Local Development Plan

- Synthesis report bringing together all the soil, air, lichen, hydrology, recreation and dog research had concluded that: *Viewed together the combination of urban effects is currently impacting on the SAC interest of the site. New development will add to this impact, as such new development will have a likely significant effect on the site.*
- Now Officers must consider how best to mitigate further harm from future developments. The Synthesis report would be presented to Members in July.
- A proposal to create a Free School 1km from the boundary of the Burnham Beeches SAC and within the green belt had been received. Officers were concerned by loss of greenbelt and air quality and traffic concerns. Superintendent had objected on grounds of 'likely significant harm' to the SAC. .

Volunteering

- **1062** hours at Burnham Beeches including an administration volunteer and reptile survey volunteers
- **949** hours recorded at City Commons with new groups at Ashtead focussing on estate work and wildlife monitoring

Incidents

- City Commons - Nesting Peregrines disturbed by trespassers with pellet gun.
- Ashtead Common - Member of staff bitten by dog and one serious dogs on dog attack
- Burnham Beeches - 52 dog incidents reported since the March Committee date

17. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Committee reminded Members that the annual visit to Dorneywood would take place on 9th June and the Epping Forest Ladies day would be held on 11th June.

19. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

MOTION: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

20. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

Resolved: That the non-public minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

21. **BUFFER LAND - ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS REVIEW**

The Committee considered the report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

22. **REFRESHMENT CONCESSIONS ON EPPING FOREST**

The Committee considered the report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

23. **RESTRUCTURE OF THE EPPING FOREST OPERATIONS TEAM**

The Committee considered the report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

24. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

25. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was two items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Natasha Dogra
Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Agenda Item 5

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	7 July 2014
Subject:	Public
Revenue Outturn 2013/14 – Epping Forest	
Report of:	For Information
The Chamberlain and the Director of Open Spaces	

Summary

This report compares the revenue outturn for the services overseen by your Committee in 2013/14 with the final agreed budget for the year. In total, there was a worse than budget position of £398,000 for the services overseen by your Committee compared with the final agreed budget for the year as set out below.

	Final Agreed Budget	Outturn	Increase/ (Decrease)
	£000	£000	£000
Local Risk			
Director of Open Spaces	2,823	2,822	(1)
City Surveyor	877	1,234	357
Central Risk	(384)	(372)	12
Recharges	951	981	30
Total	4,267	4,665	398

The Director's better than budget position of £1,000 (Local Risk) has been aggregated with budget variations on services overseen by other committees, which produces an overall better than budget position of £232,000 (Local Risk) across all Open Spaces. It is proposed to carry forward £217,000 of this underspend. These requests will be considered by the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Resource Allocation Sub Committee.

The City Surveyor's £357,000 overspend is mainly due to a combination of the re-phasing of the additional works programme and the City Surveyor having to meet some historical claims from the breakdown-maintenance contractor. In the tables, figures in brackets indicate income or in hand balances, increases in income or decreases in expenditure.

Recommendations

It is recommended that this revenue outturn report for 2013/14 and the consequential implications for the 2014/15 budget are noted.

Main Report

Budget Position for 2013/14

1. The 2013/14 latest approved budget for the services overseen by your Committee received in November 2013 was £4,255. This budget was endorsed by the Court of Common Council in March 2014 and subsequently updated for approved adjustments.

Revenue Outturn 2013/14

2. Actual net expenditure for your Committee's services during 2013/14 totalled £4.665m, an overspend of £398,000 compared with the final agreed budget.
3. A summary comparison with the final agreed budget for the year is tabulated below. In the tables, figures in brackets indicate income or in hand balances, increases in income or decreases in expenditure.

Summary Comparison of 2013/14 Revenue Outturn with Final Agreed Budget			
	Final Agreed Budget	Revenue Outturn	Variations Increase/ (Reduction)
	£000	£000	£000
Local Risk			
Epping Forest	2,823	2,822	(1)
Total Director of Open Spaces	2,823	2,822	(1)
City Surveyor	231	400	169
Additional Works Programme	646	834	188
Total City Surveyor	877	1,234	357
Total Local Risk	3,700	4,056	356
Central Risk			
Capital Expenditure	326	1,114	788
Income	(710)	(1,486)	(776)
Total Central Risk	(384)	(372)	12
Recharges			
Central Recharges	779	848	69
Recharges Within Funds	161	132	(29)
Recharges Across Funds	11	1	(10)
Total Recharges	951	981	30
NET EXPENDITURE	4,267	4,665	398

4. Appendix A provides more detail and explanations of the significant variations.

Local Risk Carry Forward to 2013/14

5. Chief Officers can generally request underspends of up to 10% or £500,000 (whichever is the lesser) of the final agreed local risk budget to be carried forward, so long as the underspending is not fortuitous and the resources are required for a planned purpose. Such requests are subject to the approval of the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Resources Allocation Sub Committee.
6. Overspends are carried forward in full and are met from the agreed 2014/15 budgets.
7. The Director's better than budget position of £1,000 (Local Risk) has been aggregated with budget variations on services overseen by other committees which produce an overall better than budget position of £232,000 (Local Risk) of which £217,000 has been submitted for a carry forward as outlined below:
 - i) £44,000 towards refurbishment of St Brides, St Dunstan's in the East, & St Paul's Cathedral Garden.
 - ii) £89,000 (£60,000 vehicle purchase & £29,000 photovoltaic installation) at the Cemetery.
 - iii) £44,000 Great Gregories over-wintering facility at Epping Forest.
 - iv) £10,000 West Ham Park Nursery Business Plan.
 - v) £10,000 Feasibility Study – Parliament Hill.
 - vi) £20,000 New Signage – Hampstead Heath

Dr Peter Kane
Chamberlain

Sue Ireland
Director of Open Spaces

Contact:
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Epping Forest
Comparison of 2013/14 Revenue Outturn with Final Agreed Budget

	Final Agreed Budget	Revenue Outturn	Variation Increase/ (Decrease)	Reasons
	£000	£000	£000	
SUMMARY				
Local Risk	2,823	2,822	(1)	
Central Risk	(384)	(372)	12	
Recharges	951	981	30	
TOTAL EPPING FOREST COMMITTEE (Excluding City Surveyors local risk)	3,390	3,431	41	
City Surveyors local risk	231	400	169	1
Additional Works Programme	646	834	188	2
TOTAL CITY SURVEYOR	877	1,234	357	
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	4,267	4,665	398	
LOCAL RISK				
Epping Forest	2,444	2,410	(34)	
Epping - CBT	366	365	(1)	
HLF - Branching Out Project	15	12	(3)	
Chingford Golf Course	(95)	(52)	43	
Wanstead Flats	120	106	(14)	
Woodredon & Warlies	(27)	(19)	8	
TOTAL LOCAL RISK	2,823	2,822	(1)	
CENTRAL RISK				
Epping Forest	(18)	(7)	11	
Epping - CBT	(366)	(365)	1	
TOTAL CENTRAL RISK	(384)	(372)	12	
RECHARGES				
Insurance	69	70	1	
Support Services	408	409	1	
Surveyor's Employee Recharge	214	274	60	3
I. S. Recharge	88	95	7	
Recharges Within Fund (Directorate & Corporate Dem Core)	161	132	(29)	
Recharges to other Funds (Woodredon & Warlies)	11	1	(10)	
TOTAL RECHARGES	951	981	30	

Reasons for Significant Variations

1. The £169,000 overspend in the City Surveyor's Local Risk, the City Surveyor had to meet historical claims from the Breakdown Maintenance contractor which resulted in an overspend across the estate.
2. The £188,000 increase in expenditure on the additional works programme reflects an improved spending profile, which is due to the re-phasing of projects. The performance and progress relating to the delivery of the additional works programme is reported to the Corporate Asset Sub Committee on a quarterly basis.
3. The £60,000 overspend within Recharges is due to the Surveyor's Employee Recharges. Surveyor's Employee Recharges are allocated to the various areas of Epping Forest & Commons in proportion to works undertaken. However, more work was carried out at Epping Forest than anticipated which resulted in an overspend, this was off-set by the underspend at City Commons where less work was carried out.

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject:	Non-Public/Public
Update on the Epping Forest Visitor Survey	Public
Report of:	For Decision
Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 15/14	
Summary	
<p>This report informs your committee of the results of the fourth year of the Epping Forest Visitor Survey (EFVS) which was conducted during 2013. The EFVS builds upon the survey data gathered since the survey began in 2010, and continues to provide a more accurate picture of the visitor profile for Epping Forest. The EFVS data estimates that the total number of visits (rather than visitors) to Epping Forest in 2013 was 4.4 million.</p> <p>Statistics from the Questionnaire and Observational surveys have been used in management plans, reports to sponsors, funding bids, information for consultants, influencing partners and press releases. Action plans have been created to raise awareness about issues and, where relevant, make improvements.</p> <p>The survey is a significant tool in informing management decisions across the Forest, evaluating the impact of initiatives and demonstrating our compliance with our statutory Equality Duty.</p> <p>Now completely managed within the department, resources incurred are staff time with 417hrs provided by staff and 432hrs provided by volunteers.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the content of the report and agree the site action plans for 2014 (Appendix 1). • Approve the publication of the 2013 visitor survey and related documents on the City of London website (Appendices 1 and 2). • Approve the undertaking an annual visitor survey (combined Observation and Questionnaire), which is subject to review after five years. 	

Main Report

Background

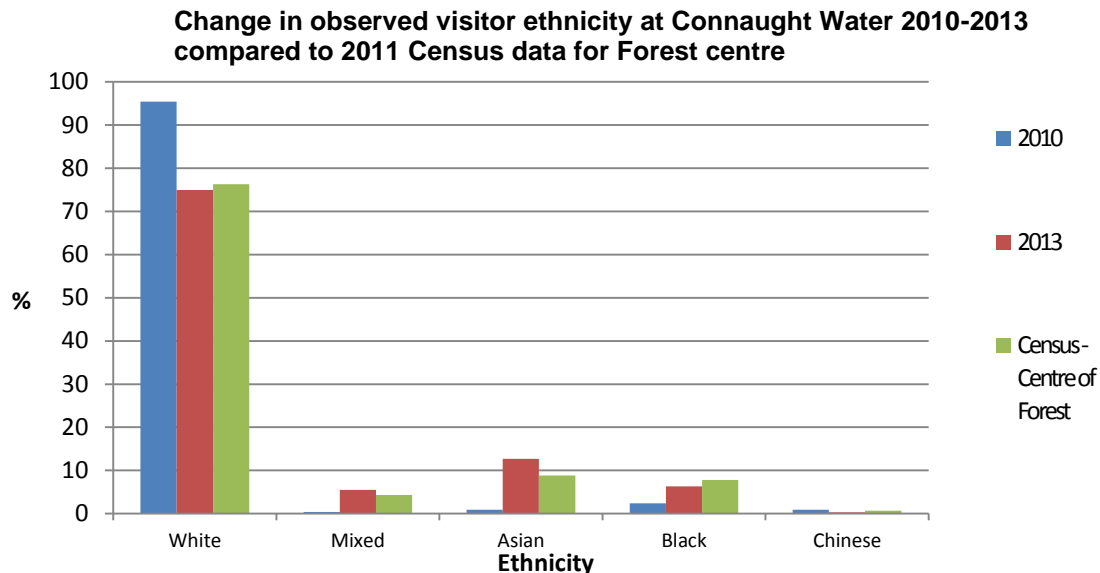
1. The Epping Forest Visitor Survey (EFVS) began in 2010. It was designed and delivered in its first year by specialist consultancy Alison Millward Associates as part of a four year project to train Epping Forest staff and volunteers to deliver the project independently.

2. As part of the phased handover, delivery, analysis and report production of the EFVS was managed internally by the Community Liaison Officer from 2012.
3. The annual EFVS is a dual approach comprising of a Questionnaire Survey and an Observation Survey.
4. The Questionnaire Survey provides the opportunity for visitors to express their opinions of Epping Forest and how it is managed. It was available at our Forest Centres, online and through face to face interviews conducted by the Visitor Services section, Forest Keeper section and volunteers.
5. The Observation Survey records what visitors do when they come to the Forest. To assist this process, the Forest has been divided into 30 geographically distinct sites, the estimated number of visits for each of which we refine through observation. The survey is then repeated on a regular basis across these sites, especially where there has been major capital investment.
6. One hour routes were walked repeatedly at set times across the summer by a team of volunteers and staff for the Observation Survey. In 2013 seven new sites were surveyed across the Forest. Gilbert Slade in the south, Hatch Forest and Whitehall Plain and Woodford Green in the centre and Hangboy Slade, Honey Lane Quarters, St Thomas's Quarter and Wake Valley in the north. Connaught Water first surveyed in 2010 was resurveyed in 2013 following the improvement works in 2012.
7. The total number of visits to 24 of the geographically distinct sites can now be calculated using data from 2010 - 2013. The results help us to estimate figures for the remaining six sites not yet surveyed. Other recorded statistics, such as visitor centre statistics and football pitch bookings, are included to develop a more accurate picture of the actual number of visits to Epping Forest. The estimated total number of visits to Epping Forest in 2013 based on data from 2010-2013 was 4.4 million per annum. A more accurate picture will only be available at the end of 2014 when all of the 30 sites have been surveyed.
8. The number of visits is calculated, not the number of visitors, as one visitor may return many times.
9. The EFVS is designed to gain a greater understanding of how many people visit Epping Forest, their principal activities and how representative they are of the local population. The survey is recognised by Heritage Lottery as an important means of evaluating the impact of the capital projects that are being funded as part of the Branching Out project, including The View and landscaping works.

Current Position

10. For the Observation Survey, staff and volunteers counted and mapped the location of 1,395 visitors across eight sites over 60 hours during the summer of 2013. In addition, 1,083 questionnaire surveys were completed.

11. The total volunteer time for the whole project was in excess of 400 hours in 2013. This included collecting and inputting the data from both the Observation Survey (384hrs) and the Questionnaire Survey (48hrs).
12. The results surveying over four years show that the areas with the highest footfall are in the south of the Forest and at honeypot sites (Wanstead Flats, Wanstead Park, Leyton Flats, Connaught Water, Chingford Plain, High Beach and the Pillow Mounds). Most sites in the north of the Forest have low visit numbers, a result of their remote nature and sparser local population.
13. The results can also be compared to the 2011 census data to ensure we are accessible to all of our local community. Age of visitors and ethnicity varies by site, demonstrating that the Forest has a wide range of users with some areas proving more amenable to different groups.
14. Of the sites surveyed in 2013, Hangboy Slade, Honey Lane Quarters, St Thomas's Quarter and Wake Valley all received approximately 50,000 or less visits. These sites are of high conservation value and it is important that they remain relatively undisturbed. Whitehall Plain and Gilbert Slade received approximately 75,000 visits each and Woodford Green received 283,270 visits. They are well used by the local community as amenity sites (commuter route / daily to exercise / walk the dog).
15. Connaught Water was surveyed in 2010 and resurveyed last year after the Branching Out improvement works, which took place in 2012. Results show it now has a much more diverse visitor profile, better reflecting the local community.



16. Visitor density maps produced by the survey are overlaid with tree inspection regimes to assess priority inspection areas for our Tree Safety Zone review.
17. The Questionnaire Survey gave us more information on people's opinion of the Forest, their favourite areas, how often they visit and how they travel to the Forest along with a range of other data covering the visitor experience.

18. All of the visitor ‘hubs’ with more than 200,000 visits (Appendix 2 identifies eight) remain popular with Queen Elizabeth’s Hunting Lodge and The View doubling in popularity after improvements in 2012.
19. The respondents generally rated access to the Forest positively with an improvement in the rating for way finding. This has been increasing year on year and appears to coincide with the installation of the way marked trails.
20. The surveys revealed that active pursuits (cycling, running, cricket, football, etc.) account for 21% of all visits to the Forest, proving its value as a resource for improving health and fitness.
21. Further comments included:
 - “More signage please, and directions from stations in appropriate places. It is easy to get lost”*
 - “The access improvements to Connaught Waters are absolutely fabulous – for someone who has difficulty in walking, there’s nowhere else like it”*
 - “The lack of provision for any bins of a suitable size at key locations is terrible.”*
 - “Very grateful for the work that is done by the Conservators to maintain and retain such an important public place. We are very fortunate to have it on our doorsteps!”*
22. The results of Visitor Survey will be posted on the City of London’s website www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/epping_forestvisitorsurvey, pending Committee approval, and reports from previous surveys can be viewed here. They are accompanied by reports on progress with action plans derived from the survey.
23. Statistics from the Questionnaire and Observational surveys have been used in management plans, reports to sponsors, funding bids, information for consultants, influencing partners and press releases. Action plans have been created to raise awareness about issues and, where relevant, make improvements

Evaluation

24. Through the visitor survey project we will continue to develop our understanding of visitors to the Forest. This data allows us to assess the impact of new initiatives and capital investments on our sites as well as informing the future management of the Forest.
25. A breakdown of resources is set out below

Staff Commitment		Volunteer Commitment	
Hours	Details	Hours	Details
98	GIS Officer map preparation and data analysis	384	Observation Survey collection and data input of 8 sites
41	Forest Keepers Questionnaire survey collection	10	Visitor Survey Volunteers Questionnaire Survey collection

68	Visitor Services Questionnaire survey collection and input	38	Questionnaire Survey Data input
210	Community Liaison Officer Project management	n/a	
417	TOTAL	432	TOTAL

26. An Evaluation Report has been prepared for the Visitor Survey project, which demonstrates its significance in providing evidence for informed decision making almost every area of aspect of our work, from conservation to the visitor experience.

Proposals

27. The Questionnaire Survey will be run between May and September 2014 with data being collected online and by forward facing staff and volunteers including Visitor Services and Forest Keeper sections.
28. The Questionnaire Survey will then continually annually and be reviewed in five years' time.
29. The Observation Survey for 2014 will be conducted by staff and volunteers from April to September. It will include the six as yet unsurveyed sites and resurveying at Wanstead Flats, High Beach, Barn Hoppitt and Fairmead.
30. The Observation Survey will continue until every site has been surveyed at least twice. Additional to this sites where capital works or improvement works have been carried out, these sites will also be surveyed following the completion of the projects, including Wanstead Flats, Highams Park and Wanstead Park. The Observation survey project will be reviewed in five years' time.
31. Site action plans will be implemented for the areas surveyed in 2013 (Appendix 1).
32. Posters will be put up reporting on progress to date with actions identified from previous visitor surveys (Appendix 3)
33. The Community Liaison Officer will hand over coordination, analysis and reporting for the visitor survey to the Visitor Services or Business Team, with training and work shadowing from May 2014.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

34. By gathering and collating statistics on visitors, effectively our service users, and involving volunteers in the process, the Visitor Survey helps to meet three of The City Together Strategy's aim to be competitive and promote opportunity. Along with the aim of supporting our communities and promoting and enhancing our environment.
35. Volunteering and community involvement are included in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2012 – 2015 Strategic Aim, "A World Class City needs a World Class Environment". The Visitor Survey fulfils all of the Open Spaces

Departmental Objectives of quality, inclusion, environment, promotion and people.

36. Inauguration costs for the visitor survey totalled £39,972 for consultancy fees. Payment was divided equally between Local Risk and the Branching Out project, which receives Heritage Lottery funding.
37. The visitor survey directly relates to Management Plan strands such as volunteering, training and public involvement whilst also informing areas such as outreach, equality and accessibility. The survey helps demonstrate our compliance with our duty under the Equality act 2010.

Conclusion

38. Having completed its fourth year, the EFVS continues to give us further insight into the many different areas of Epping Forest. As more data is accumulated, trends are becoming more apparent and over time we may be able to infer the effects of various projects throughout the Forest.
39. The total number of annual visits to Epping Forest is now estimated at 4.4 million. As with previous years the Questionnaire Survey shows that the honeypot areas remain hugely popular and receive 46% of Forest visits.
40. The findings from the 2013 visitor survey have allowed Epping Forest to produce site action plans for the eight sites surveyed and highlighted potential issues and opportunities to improve these sites for visitors and the natural environment.
41. Sharing the results with the public via the web pages strengthens the relationship between the City and the local community. It demonstrates our journey towards change showing we are thinking of our customers, we have a plan and are working towards it.
42. The first four years of the EFVS project was mainly collecting baseline data, revisiting these sites and surveying them in the future allows us to evaluate the impact of projects and ensure we are providing a good service to our customers.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Visitor Survey 2013, Site Action Plans
- Appendix 2 – Visitor Survey 2013, Full report
- Appendix 3 – Visitor Survey 2013, Report Posters

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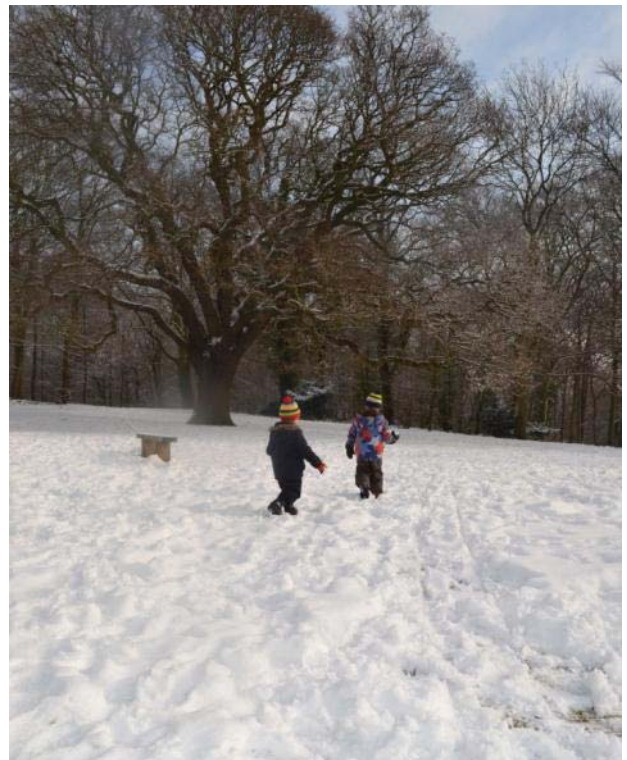
Appendix 1 – Visitor Survey 2013, Site Action Plans

Site	Details	Lead Officer	Completed
Hatch Forest & Whitehall Plain	Assessment and repair, if required, of bridge over River Ching	HoO	April 2015
	Liaise with LBWF regarding improvements to the crossing of Whitehall Road to improve safety.	HoO	April 2015
Woodford Green	Installation of interpretation panel Delivery of two events, to be held at a weekend	VSM VSM / HFK	April 2015 October 2014
	Paths to be opened up around the Green	HoO	October 2014
Hangboy Slade	No Action Required		
St Thomas's Quarter	No Action Required		
Wake Valley	No Action Required		
Hangboy Slade	No Action Required		
Connaught Water	No Action Required		
Gilbert Slade	No Action Required		

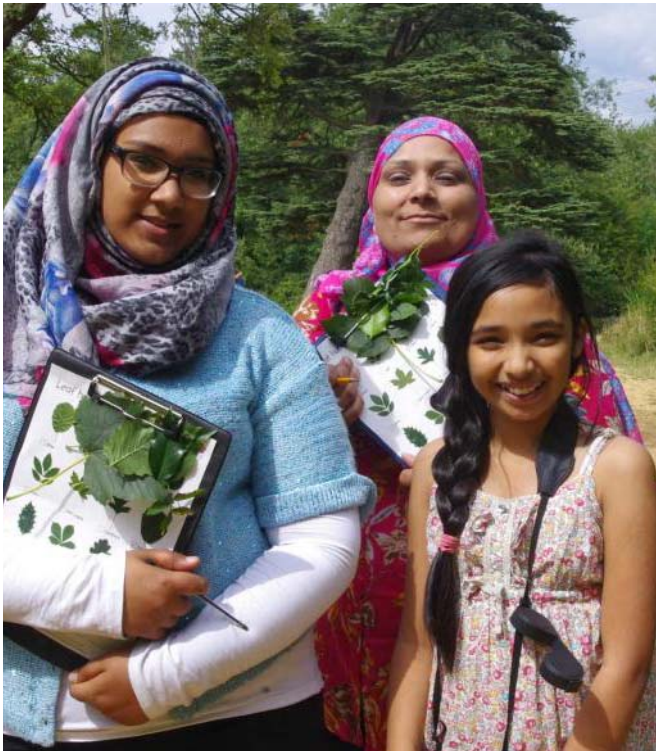
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Site	Details	Lead Office	Completed
Hatch Forest & Whitehall Plain	Assessment and repair, if required, of bridge over River Ching Liaise with LBWF regarding improvements to the crossing of Whitehall Road to improve safety.	HoO	April 2015
		HoO	April 2015
Woodford Green	Installation of interpretation panel Delivery of two events, to be held at a weekend Paths to be opened up around the Green	VSM	April 2015
		VSM / HFK	October 2014
		HoO	October 2014
Hangboy Slade	No Action Required		
St Thomas's Quarter	No Action Required		
Wake Valley	No Action Required		
Honey Lane Quarters	No Action Required		
Connaught Water	No Action Required		
Gilbert Slade	No Action Required		

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Visitor Survey 2013 Full Report



1. Introduction

Having now completed its fourth year, the Epping Forest Visitor survey follows a well-established methodology and has produced significant findings, helping the City of London (CoL) to manage the unique and varied landscape of Epping Forest in a more effective and proactive manner as the impacts and pressures on the Forest change.

The visitor survey consists of two components:

- the observation survey enables us to produce and compile objective data on our visitors at different sites around the Forest, such as age, gender, ethnicity and activities
- the questionnaire survey allows our visitors to express their views and opinions about the Forest and how it is managed.

Both elements of the survey provide excellent and essential information which is complemented by the knowledge and skills of our dedicated staff and volunteers.

2. Observation Survey

During the 2013 observation survey, volunteers and staff counted and mapped the location of 1,395 visitors across eight sites over 60 hours. Following a plotted route around each site, surveyors noted information including the location of all visitors. Eight surveys were conducted on each site, coordinated to cover weekends and school holidays as well as different times of day. Using these statistics and assuming an average year-round figure of 12 hours per day suitable for visits, a calculation of the estimated visits per annum to each site can be made.

Using the figures obtained from the last three survey years, the new estimated total number of visits per annum is **4.4 million**.

With the addition of the survey figures for the 17 sites previously observed, we now have observed visit figures for 25 sites within Epping Forest (see Table 1 and figure 10). To the combined total of these (actual and still estimated figure of 4,122,777) we have added the number of people we know to have attended events and activities and visited the website during 2013 (figure 2), to calculate our latest rounded up estimate of 4.4 million visits.

Additionally, for the first time in the history of the survey, we have repeated the survey on a site which has received major capital investment with funding from Heritage Lottery. First surveyed in 2010, Connaught Water has since benefitted from improvement works during 2012. By surveying the site again this year, we will be able to make some inferences about the success or otherwise of these works. We will repeat surveys periodically, particularly at sites where there have been significant changes as well as surveying the remaining five sites, which have not had an initial survey. This will give us more accurate statistics for the whole Forest.

Table 1: Estimate of Total Forest Visits at end 2013 (excluding events and web hits)

Site Name	Observed visits pa	Survey Year	Region	% of total visits
Ambresbury Banks	74,547	2010	North	1.8
High Beach/Pillow Mounds	279,062	2010	North	6.9
Wanstead Park	216,906	2010	South	5.3
Chingford Plain	229,376	2010	Centre	5.6
Wanstead Flats	395,263	2011	South	9.7
Hollow Ponds	429,420	2011	South	10.5
Fairmead Bottom & Almshouse Plain	256,740	2011	Centre	6.3
Bury Wood	166,680	2011	Centre	4.1
Loughton Camp	63,195	2011	Centre	1.6
Lower Forest	30,540	2011	North	0.7
Bush Wood	167,908	2012	South	4.1
Highams Park	72,528	2012	Centre	1.8
Pole Hill and Yardley Hill	41,129	2012	Centre	1.0
Barn Hoppitt	177,484	2012	Centre	4.4
Strawberry Hill Pond Area	147,749	2012	Centre	3.6
Lords Bushes & Knighton Woods	116,404	2012	Centre	2.9
Honey Lane Quarters	54,203	2013	North	1.3
Wake Valley	41,364	2013	North	1.0
Hangboy Slade & Jacks Hill	56,176	2013	North	1.4
Connaught Water*	330,698	2013	Centre	8.1
Woodford Green	283,270	2013	Centre	7.0
Whitehall Plain & Hatch Forest	72,818	2013	Centre	1.8
Gilbert Slade	76,663	2013	South	1.9
St Thomas's Quarter	32,654	2013	North	0.8
Great Monk Wood	50,000*		North	1.2*
Warren Plantation & Epping Thicks	75,000*		North	0.7*
Chingford Golf Course	50,000*		Centre	1.8*
Fernhills & Trueloves	30,000*		Centre	0.7*
Warren Hill	30,000*		Centre	0.7*
Walthamstow Forest	75,000*		South	1.8*
TOTAL	4,122,777			*estimate

*Original survey at Connaught Water conducted in 2010. Discussed further in 3.1

Table 2: Visitor Statistics for 2013 compared with 2011 and 2012

Event type	Number of participants		
	2011	2012	2013
Events from Events Diary	11,900	13,090	13,651
Visits to the Field Studies Centre	23,000	22,141	22,304
Visits to Suntrap	12,745	12,794	12,766
Events led by the Centenary Trust	3,600	3,358	1,508
Discovering Epping Forest sessions	4,500	4,500	0
Family Learning Events (nine events a year)	2718	3011	3514
Visits to the Chingford Hub	23,219	36,573*	73,762
Visits to the Epping High Beach Visitor Centre	28,560	19,702	10,255
Visits to The Temple	12,218	10,906	10,037
HLF Forest Introduction Events	701	692	360
Visits to Chingford Golf Course	24,000	26,629	21,408
Football (pitch numbers reduced in 2012)	73,414	65,604	68,245
Web hits	51,094	73,764	95,741
TOTAL	271,669	292,764	333,551

* The View visitor centre closed for 6 months in 2012 for redevelopment

3. 2013 Results

3.1 Connaught Water

Figure 1: Change in observed visitor ethnicity at Connaught Water 2010-2013 compared to 2011 Census data for Forest centre

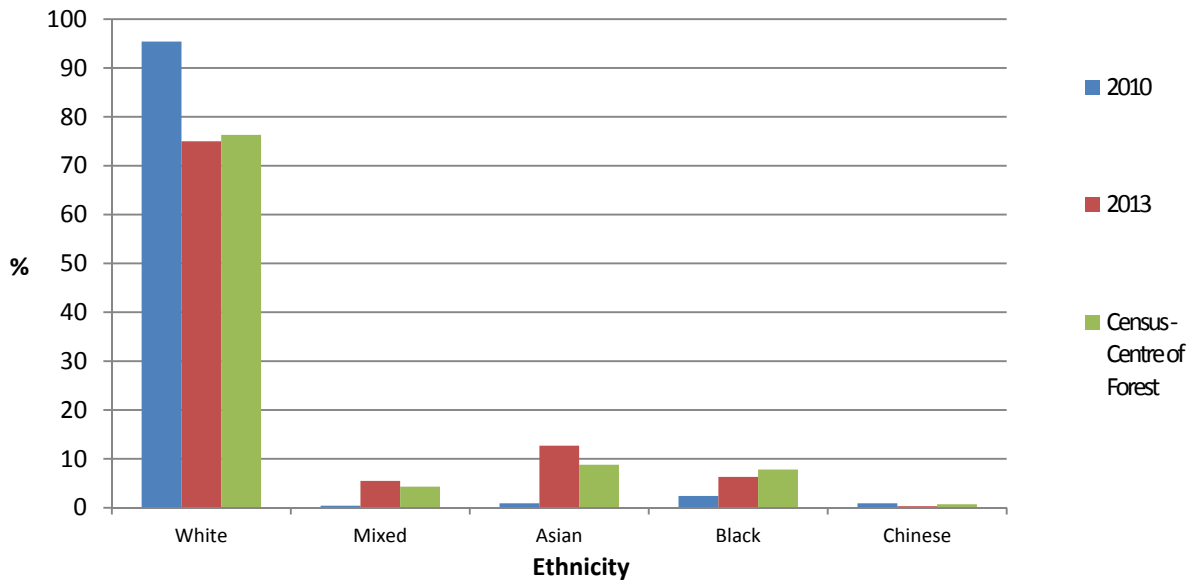
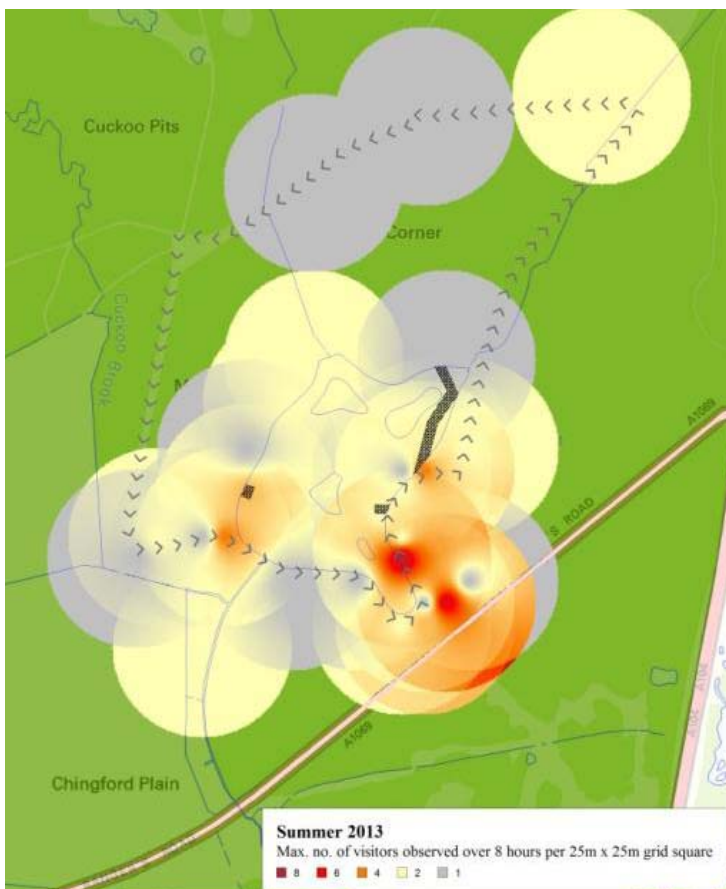


Figure 2 – Density distribution of visitors over 65 at Connaught Water



Connaught Water is a man-made lake and a popular visitor destination in the centre of the Forest, only 600m from facilities at The View visitor centre. As part of the Heritage Lottery funded Branching Out project, the site underwent a series of improvements for visitors in 2012. When originally surveyed in 2010, Connaught Water returned an annual visit estimate of 205,469. The 2013 estimate of 330,698 therefore represents a significant increase in visits of nearly 61%. A range of factors, such as the weather, can influence the final visit estimate and it was also relevant that a particularly large scout group was visiting the site during one of the survey dates. However, the main reason for the increase is likely to be from improved access, increased publicity and better facilities such as picnic tables resulting from the capital works.

Improvements to the car park and access path and the addition of a new boardwalk and fishing platforms have enhanced this honeypot destination on the Forest for a greater number of visitors. Figure 1 shows the observed ethnicity of visitors to Connaught

Water in 2013 survey reflecting much more closely the 2011 census data for the population within 2km of the forest boundary than the 2010 survey. Connaught water is becoming a destination for a much more diverse visitor profile, better reflecting the local community.

Peak visitor times at Connaught Water remained at weekends between 2pm and 3pm and the age distribution followed the census data quite well but with an increase in those 15 and under on the 2010 survey.

Improvements at Connaught Water also increased and upgraded seating options around the site, making the site more accessible and practical for older and disabled users. The 2013 survey shows almost double the level of visitors observed sitting around the site and figure 2 also illustrates the benefit of these provisions, with the 'hotspots' of over 65 visitors grouped around seating areas. Disabled users were at around 2.1% of visitors to Connaught Water, higher than any other site surveyed this year.

3.2 Gilbert Slade

Figure 3 – Cyclists and all visitors at Gilbert Slade

With an annual visit estimate of 76,663, Gilbert Slade is situated in the Southern part of Epping Forest and is immediately south of the busy A406 and Waterworks roundabout. To the east and west are densely populated residential areas and the results indicate that it is perhaps best viewed as an amenity for the local community rather than as a destination for visitors. This can best be illustrated by the high level of visitors with a dog (35.5%) and also the use of the site by runners (4.7%), cyclists (18%) and young people playing (6%). Under 20's and over 65's were underrepresented at this site in comparison with the census data, with the majority of visitors being in the 20-44 age bracket. As with other parts of the Forest, visitors were predominantly white (90%), though given the location of the site in the south of the Forest, this is perhaps a surprise.



3.3 Hangboy Slade

In the northern part of the Forest, Hangboy Slade and Jacks Hill contain large areas of pollarded Beech, Hornbeam and Oak trees alongside smaller areas of heathland. The site is bordered by Debden campsite to the east as well as being in close proximity to Loughton golf course and the Deer Sanctuary.

Results showed the site to be less well used, with 56,176 estimated visits per annum. The site was three times busier during the weekend and visitors were largely white (96.6%) and between 20 and 44 (63.6%). Cycling was a hugely popular activity on this site (33%) along with running (17%). There were also a large number of young people playing on the site and climbing trees (14.8%), though this result was influenced by one large group during a weekend survey, as was the cycling result. For sites with low visitor numbers, one such large group can exert a larger influence on final results. The busiest areas of the site were the Broad Strood car park and confluence of Ditches Ride and Green Ride (figure 4). During the survey, four people were observed mushroom picking and two using metal detectors, both activities against the byelaws of the Forest. This illustrates some of the difficulties which can be encountered by those managing the Forest and we continue to work hard to educate the public about the safe and responsible use of our sites. You can find out more about our byelaws at our website www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforest.

Figure 4 – Cyclists and all visitors at Hangboy Slade



3.4 Hatch Forest and Whitehall Plain

Figure 5 – Dog walkers and all visitors at Hatch Forest and Whitehall Plain



Hatch Forest is an area of Hornbeam coppice through which the Ching River flows with a sports ground to the west and Woodford Golf Course to the south. To the north of this is Whitehall Plain, an open grassland area with some stands of scrub and gorse that links on to the popular Barn Hoppitt area. The site returned a slightly lower than expected visit estimate of 72,818 visits per annum, with weekend visits three times higher. The use of the site by cyclists (39.9%), runners (11.6%) and dog walkers (29%) shows the varied use of the site for recreational and amenity activities. As with previous surveys, figure 5 shows the visits by dog walkers mainly using the open grassland areas of the site. Visits to the site by those under 20 were significantly lower than the local census data and there was a gender disparity with 65.2% of visits by males.

3.5 Honey Lane Quarter

Figure 6 – Density of all visitors at Honey Lane Quarter



Another site in the north of the Forest, Honey Lane Quarter is a steeply-sloping west-facing site consisting of mainly pollarded woodland with a grassy plain to the south. The site has two well surfaced rides and a prominent viewing point as well as car parks at the northwest and south of the site.

The site has a low annual visit estimate of 54,203 despite being close to the hugely popular Pillow Mounds and High Beach area. Again, it is over three times busier at weekends. Cycling was hugely popular at this site (35.2%) and it also showed a good diversity of visitors, 22% of which were Asian. The site was slightly underused by those under 20.

Figure 6 demonstrates how visitors tend to stick to the surfaced rides and paths around the Forest, with very few people using the unsurfaced tracks in woodland areas in the northern part of the survey route.

3.6 St Thomas Quarter

Figure 7 – St Thomas Quarter visitors by various user types

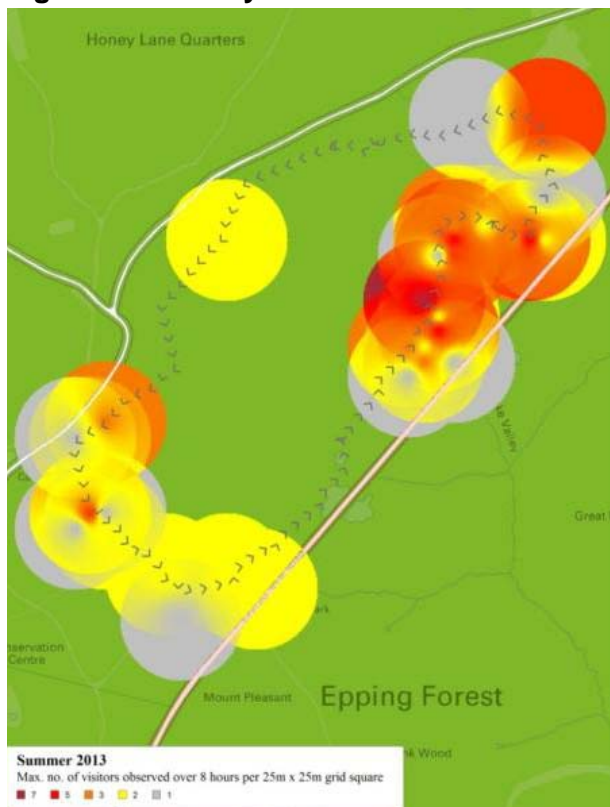


To the north of Honey Lane Quarter, the mature beech woodland of St Thomas Quarter has a very low annual visitor estimate of 32,654. With such low visitor pressure, the site provides a refuge for fallow deer. With a riding school and stables nearby, the site is popular with horse riders (15.3%) and the presence of cyclists (22.2%) and visitors with dogs (15.3%) as shown in figure 7 has the potential to result in conflict. 34.7% of observed visitors are under 20, higher than census data, and presumably as a consequence of the nearby riding school, as the majority of under 20s were also horse riders. The ethnicity of observed visitors was also quite diverse compared to similar sites in the north of the Forest.

The Lodge Road car park here has been closed intermittently to discourage the occasional instances of fly-tipping at this site, which may have further lowered the visitor numbers.

3.7 Wake Valley

Figure 8 – Density distribution of all visitors at Wake Valley

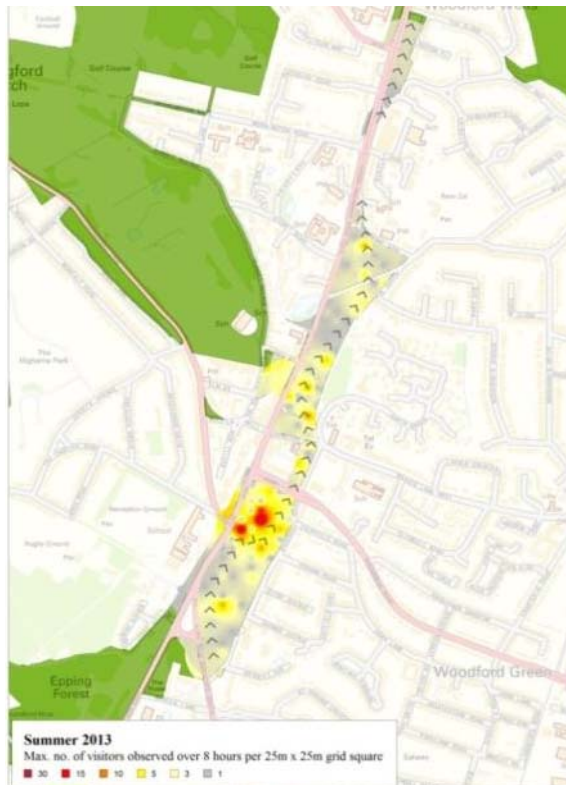


A mosaic of beech wood and heathland with a number of ponds and an estimate of 41,364 annual visits, Wake Valley is of a similarly low level of visits to the nearby Honey Lane Quarter and St Thomas Quarter. The highest areas of use were around the two car parks, at Sunshine Plain and Wake Valley Pond, as shown in figure 8. With no surfaced paths through the majority of this site, it can be difficult for visitors to traverse some areas, especially near to ponds or in wet weather.

Visitors were again mainly white, but with an age range close to the census. Fishing and sitting were popular activities with people sitting around Wake Valley Pond or on Sunshine Plain enjoying picnics in the height of summer. The site was also used by bird watchers and the more adventurous cyclist.

3.8 Woodford Green

Figure 9 – Density distribution of all visitors at Woodford Green



Woodford Green is a stretch of well-used amenity grassland running alongside the popular Woodford High Road. The site returned a high annual visit estimate of 283,270 and the majority of this use appears to be functional. However, recreational use is more apparent at the weekend. This is reflected in the busiest visitor period, 7.30am – 9am on weekday mornings. This consisted mainly of people crossing the Green on their way to work and the nearby schools, and Woodford County High School for Girls in particular. 5-15 year olds at this time of day accounted for 11.7% of the total visitor count for the whole eight hour survey period. 46% of all observed female visitors were seen during this time period, and a more ethnically diverse population was also recorded at this time.

At weekends, the cricket pitch accounted for the majority of visits with 24.2% of all visitors either watching or playing. Figure 9 shows the high distribution of visitors on and around the

cricket pitch and of those through-routing to work or school.

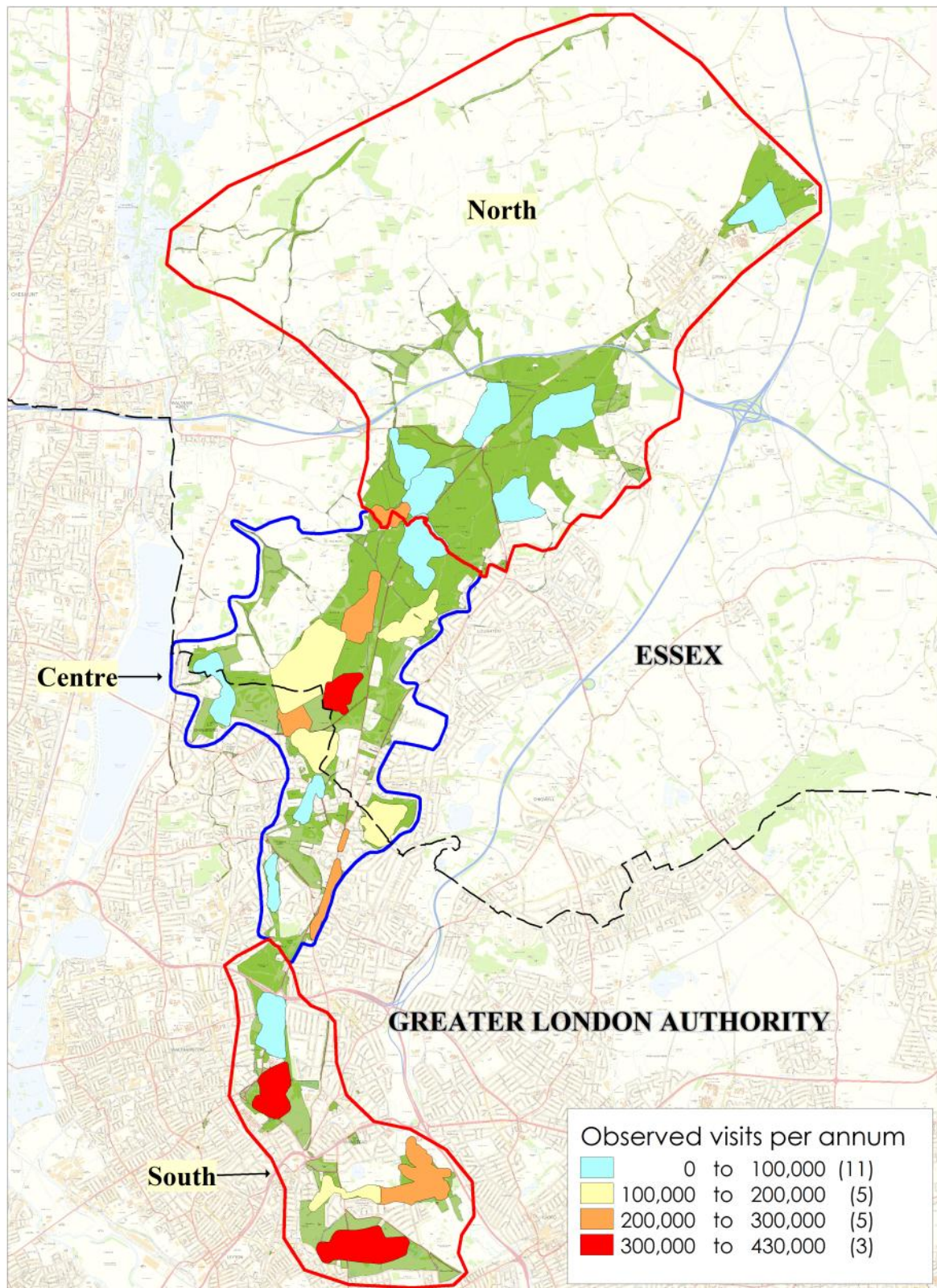
3.9 Whole Forest data

The results of the last four years of the survey can now be combined to show relative footfall, as shown in figure 10. Areas to the south of the Forest, with a much higher local population, are predictably popular as are areas around honeypot sites such as Connaught Water, High Beach and the Chingford Hub. Most sites in the north of the Forest are low in visit numbers, a function of their remote nature, reduced accessibility by public transport and the sparser population in these areas.

Using the three geographic regions of the Forest, the south is shown to have the densest visitor distribution with 3118 visits per annum per hectare of space. This contrasts to the north, which receives 727 visits per hectare. The central area accounts for around 48% of all visits to the Forest and combines good transport links with honeypot destinations, facilities and an engaged and involved local population (see figure 12 for location of respondents to the 2013 questionnaire).

The use and popularity of honeypot destinations on the Forest represents the success of visitor management measures as larger numbers of people are attracted to sites with improvements and facilities such as sites around the Chingford Hub. Visits to Wanstead Flats, Wanstead Park, Chingford Plain, Connaught Water, High Beach Pillow Mounds and Hollow Ponds account for 46% of all visits. Increased seating and better paths at Connaught Water for example make these sites much more resistant to erosion and damage from higher footfall than other more sensitive sites would be and therefore such developments can be seen as helping to conserve the wider forest by attracting visitors around these locations.

Figure 10 – Visit estimates per annum on each surveyed site around Epping Forest



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4. Observation Survey Visitor Profiles

Previous surveys have shown that those living within 2km of the edge of the Forest comprise at least 95% of all visitors. Using 2011 census data for Wards with at least 75% of their area within this boundary and dividing this data into the distinct areas of the north, centre and south is a particularly useful tool for comparing the ethnic diversity of each sector. Table 3 shows the big variations and differences between the local communities in each area and compares them to the total observed results from the four years of the survey so far. Most noticeable is the total population, which is almost five times larger in the south than the north.

Table 3: The 2km Census data catchment profile – comparisons between North, Centre and South of the Forest

	Census				Observation survey
	North	Centre	South	Whole	2010-13
Male	48.9%	50.3%	50.2%	50.1%	58.1%
Female	51.1%	49.7%	49.8%	49.9%	41.9%
0-4	6.4%	6.6%	8.1%	7.5%	4.9%
5-15	11.5%	12.2%	12.3%	12.2%	11.9%
16-19	5.8%	6.2%	6.0%	6.0%	8.8%
20-44	33.1%	34.2%	45.8%	41.3%	47.1%
45-65	26.8%	25.4%	18.9%	21.5%	20.1%
over 65	16.5%	15.4%	8.9%	11.5%	7.2%
White	92.0%	76.3%	37.5%	64.7%	82.3%
Mixed	2.2%	4.3%	4.4%	3.7%	2%
Asian	2.0%	8.8%	39.6%	20.2%	8%
Black	3.0%	7.8%	14.3%	8.6%	6.6%
Chinese	0.4%	0.7%	1.0%	0.8%	0.6%
Other	0.4%	2.0%	3.2%	2%	0.6%
Disabled/limited by illness	16.7%	16.0%	14.0%	14.6%	0.5%
Total Population	62,634	124,743	307,961	495,338	N/A

By looking at the data recorded for the eight 2013 survey sites we can examine how closely these follow the local census data as shown in table 3. This can help highlight areas popular with different visitors. For example, table 4 gives a brief overview of visitor profiles for the eight sites and shows that while some are representative of the local community others are less so. Gilbert Slade is in the southern part of the Forest (though on the boundary between south and centre) yet the ethnicity of observed visitors (90% white) is vastly different to that given by the census (36% white). There may be a number of factors to explain this, and the two Wards nearest Gilbert Slade do have a much lower diversity. However this is to some extent countered by the higher than expected diversity in some northern sites such as Honey Lane Quarter, which may show some 'overspill' of visitors from the nearby honeypot site of Pillow Mounds and High Beach, particularly as the well-surfaced General's Ride links the two.

Other sites show that as well as ethnicity, the age of visitors to some sites can vary, with St Thomas Quarter being more popular with those under 20 whereas other sites have an overrepresentation of over 20's and particularly the 20-44 age bracket. This demonstrates the wide variability of use within the Forest with some areas proving to be more amenable to different groups. This may be due to any number of factors and though there is no large-

scale natural segregation of ages, ethnicities and user groups, the minor fluctuations between sites show that there is some degree of preference.

As with previous surveys, dog walking was again shown to be a popular activity, with around 20% of visitors on average visiting with a dog. This is generally higher on sites which border the more populous residential areas.

Table 4: Observation survey results – user profiles

	Gender split Male:Female	% with a dog	Age and ethnicity spread
Connaught Water	52:48	19%	Diverse – closely representing the age and ethnicity of the central area
Gilbert Slade	65:35	35%	Mainly White (90%), contrary to local census data. Good spread of age ranges.
Hangboy Slade and Jacks Hill	62:38	10%	Closely follows ethnicity of local community in the north part of the Forest. Well used by 20-44 age bracket.
Hatch Forest and Whitehall Plain	65:35	30%	Mainly White (93%), More popular with over 20's.
Honey Lane Quarter	55:45	7%	Greater diversity than would be expected given local census data. All age ranges well represented.
St Thomas Quarter	56:44	15%	Greater diversity than would be expected given local census data. Under 20's over represented.
Wake Valley	59:41	5%	Mainly white (92%), similar to the local census. More popular with 20-44 age bracket.
Woodford Green	56:44	10%	Good spread of age ranges with slightly more 5-15 year olds than would be expected from census. Diverse ethnicity (16.3% Asian, 5.5% Black) approaching census.

The information in table 4 is supplemented by the more detailed overview of visitor activity shown in table 5. This shows not just the activities recorded amongst visitors for the 2013 survey, but also the three previous years. These are colour coded to show hot-spots of activity and can help us to tailor our management approaches on these sites accordingly. This demonstrates the fact that some sites and areas are favoured by certain user groups, for example it is perhaps unsurprising that horse riding is more prevalent in the northern parts of the forest where there are a higher number of stables.

One factor noticeable from the 2013 survey is the higher proportion of cyclists on some of the sites in comparison with previous surveys. Could this be a product of the increased profile this activity has had since the 2012 games? Or did these particular sites always attracted high levels of cyclists? Either way it is likely to affect the balance of these sites and how they are managed in the future. Running also appears to be a more prevalent activity in 2013, though not to the same levels as cycling. Active pursuits (cycling, running, football, cricket etc.) account for 21.2% of all visits to the Forest, proving its value as a resource for improving health and fitness.

Table 5: Observation survey - what people were observed to do on a visit?

		Nos. observed	Walking	Walking dog	Cycling	Running	Horse Riding	Standing	Sitting	In pram / buggy	Football	Playing	Fishing	Other
Average weighted by numbers observed	2010 - 13	8584	37.7%	16.9%	9.9%	5.7%	1.4%	5.7%	12.0%	1.3%	2.6%	2.5%	0.4%	3.9%
Connaught Water	2013	615	58.9%	11.2%	5.7%	4.9%	0.5%	4.2%	9.8%	2.4%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.3%
Hangboy Slade	2013	88	15.9%	6.8%	33.0%	17.0%	3.4%	2.3%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	14.8%	0.0%	2.3%
Hatch Forest & Whitehall Plain	2013	138	17.4%	29.0%	39.9%	11.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
Honey Lane Quarter	2013	91	31.9%	5.5%	35.2%	4.4%	6.6%	0.0%	16.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Gilbert Slade	2013	78	24.5%	28.0%	18.0%	5.0%	0.0%	5.3%	8.0%	0.7%	0.0%	6.0%	0.0%	4.7%
Wake Valley	2013	150	33.3%	5.1%	9.0%	0.0%	1.3%	2.6%	35.9%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	6.4%
Woodford Green	2013	343	46.9%	9.3%	3.2%	2.9%	0.0%	4.4%	14.3%	2.9%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	15.2%*
St Thomas Quarter	2013	72	40.3%	8.3%	22.2%	8.3%	15.3%	1.4%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Barn Hoppitt	2012	260	40.8%	21.9%	11.9%	3.8%	1.9%	0.0%	5.0%	1.5%	5.8%	1.2%	0.8%	5.4%
Bush Wood	2012	406	40.9%	17.0%	13.3%	18.2%	0.5%	1.5%	5.4%	1.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.7%
Highams Park	2012	151	36.0%	36.7%	10.0%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Lords Buses / Knighton Woods	2012	157	19.7%	33.1%	5.1%	4.5%	0.0%	14.0%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	21.0% ^T
Pole Hill and Yardley Hill	2012	88	17.0%	55.7%	9.1%	8.0%	3.4%	0.0%	5.7%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Strawberry Hill	2012	322	42.9%	18.3%	9.9%	8.1%	0.3%	11.5%	7.8%	0.3%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Bury Wood	2011	383	32.7%	20.9%	20.1%	7.8%	5.7%	3.9%	7.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Fairmead	2011	547	13.7%	7.9%	12.2%	3.1%	2.2%	19.7%	41.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hollow Pond	2011	851	35.4%	9.0%	6.5%	3.3%	0.0%	12.9%	17.4%	1.3%	0.5%	3.3%	0.1%	10.2% ^Δ
Loughton Camp	2011	146	43.2%	14.4%	23.3%	7.5%	3.4%	0.0%	4.8%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%
Lower Forest	2011	63	50.8%	11.1%	1.6%	3.2%	0.0%	6.3%	9.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	17.5%	0.0%
Wanstead Flats	2011	1025	28.7%	16.5%	3.3%	6.3%	0.1%	4.7%	13.7%	1.2%	15.9%	6.9%	0.0%	2.5%
Ambresbury Banks	2010	171	35.7%	19.3%	22.2%	11.1%	2.9%	4.1%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%
Chingford Plain	2010	466	44.2%	25.5%	10.3%	2.8%	4.3%	2.4%	3.0%	0.9%	1.3%	4.7%	0.0%	0.6%
Connaught Water	2010	459	48.6%	18.7%	11.1%	5.0%	4.6%	0.2%	5.7%	1.7%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	2.0%
High Beach & Pillow Mounds	2010	611	47.1%	10.8%	8.2%	0.7%	0.5%	4.7%	9.7%	1.0%	4.9%	5.7%	0.0%	6.7%
Wanstead Park	2010	903	40.2%	24.6%	4.3%	7.0%	0.0%	4.2%	12.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.8%	1.6%	3.6%
Average weighted by numbers observed	2010 - 13	8584	37.7%	16.9%	9.9%	5.7%	1.4%	5.7%	12.0%	1.3%	2.6%	2.5%	0.4%	3.9%

*Cricket players

[†]Pond dipping group

^ΔMost in rowing boats

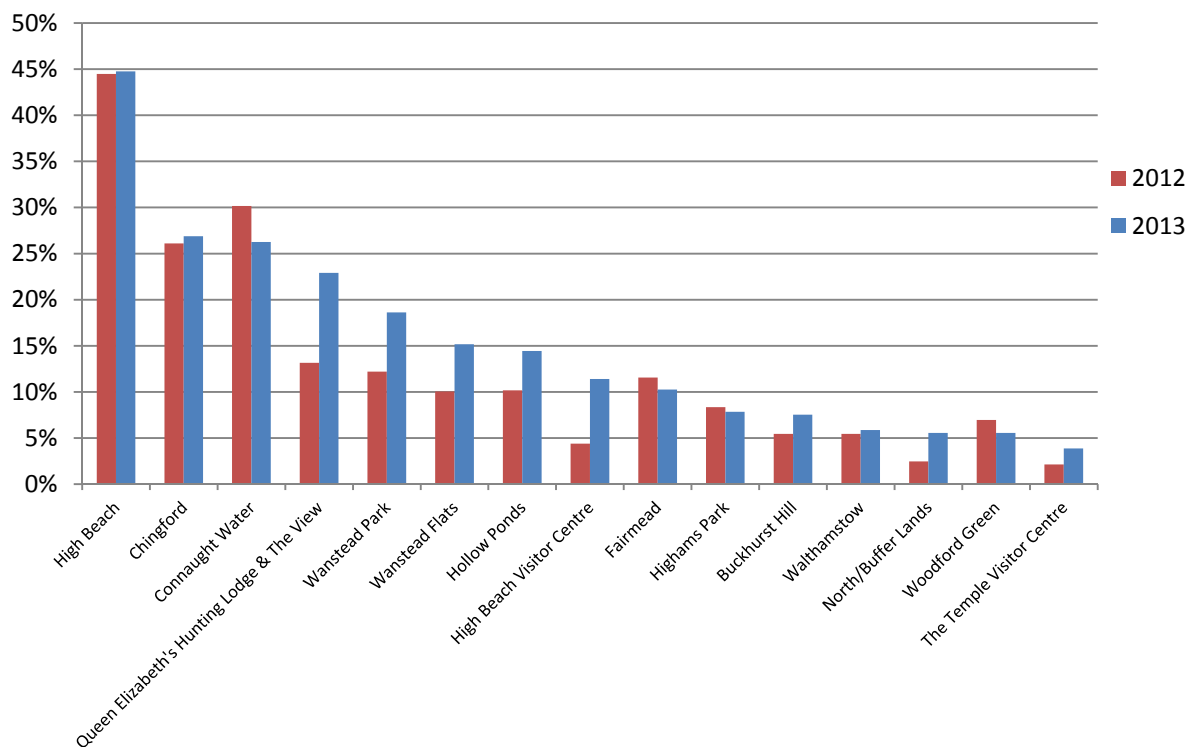
5. Questionnaire Survey

The 2013 questionnaire survey was completed by 1,083 respondents, continuing the year-on-year increase in completed surveys since the beginning of the project. The number of questions was slightly reduced in 2013 after a number of respondents commented on the length of the questionnaire in 2012. We have compiled a wealth of data and gathered the opinions of Forest users from all areas. Added to this we have results from the three previous surveys, allowing us to compare changes in public perception and user preferences over the four year period of the survey.

5.1 Where and how often people visit

Figure 11 shows that, as in previous years of the questionnaire survey, High Beach and the Pillow Mounds area remain hugely popular, as do the central areas of Chingford Plain and Connaught Water. Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge and The View visitor centre has nearly doubled in popularity after improvements at this site in 2012 and both the High Beach and Temple visitor centres have also shown an increase in responses. It is also apparent that some of the busiest areas of the Forest (Wanstead Flats, Hollow Ponds and Wanstead Parks) have shown an increase in popularity, bringing these results more into line with the results shown by the observation survey. These results are to a large extent a result of the location of those who complete the survey. As Figure 12 shows, a large proportion of respondents to this year's survey were based in the centre. There was also an increase in those from the south on 2012's survey, though this is still not close to being representative.

Figure 11 - Where people say they visit. Comparison between 2012 and 2013 surveys*



* (Respondents can select up to 3 sites)

Figure 12 –2013 Questionnaire respondents

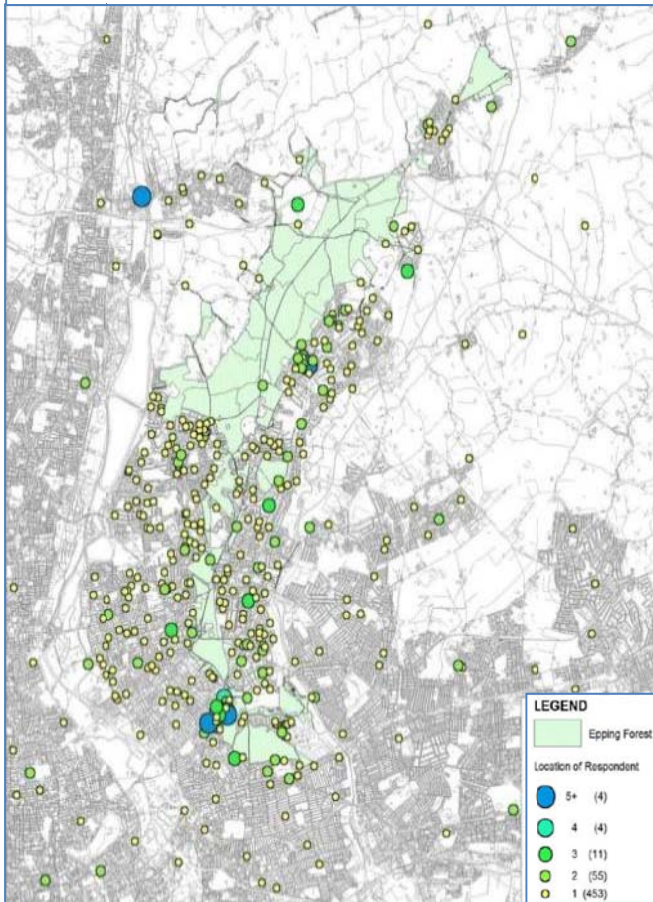
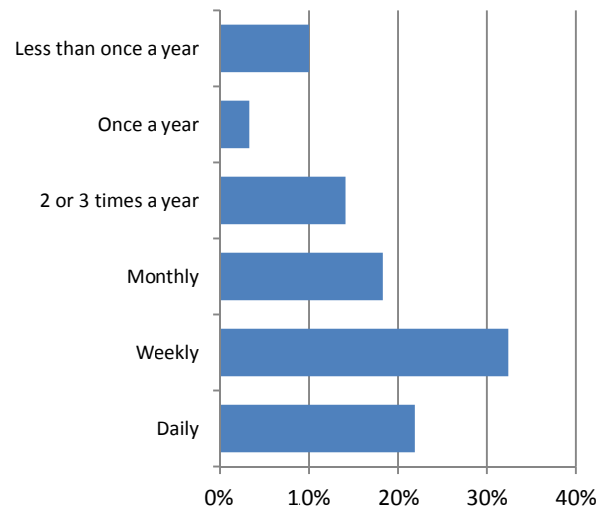


Figure 13 - Frequency of visits to Epping Forest



The southern part of the Forest represents 61% of the population of those living within 2km of the Forest boundary, so in future years we still need to improve the number of surveys completed in the south. When this is the case, the questionnaire survey results for where people visit is likely to match the observational survey results even more closely.

Figure 13 shows the frequency of visits

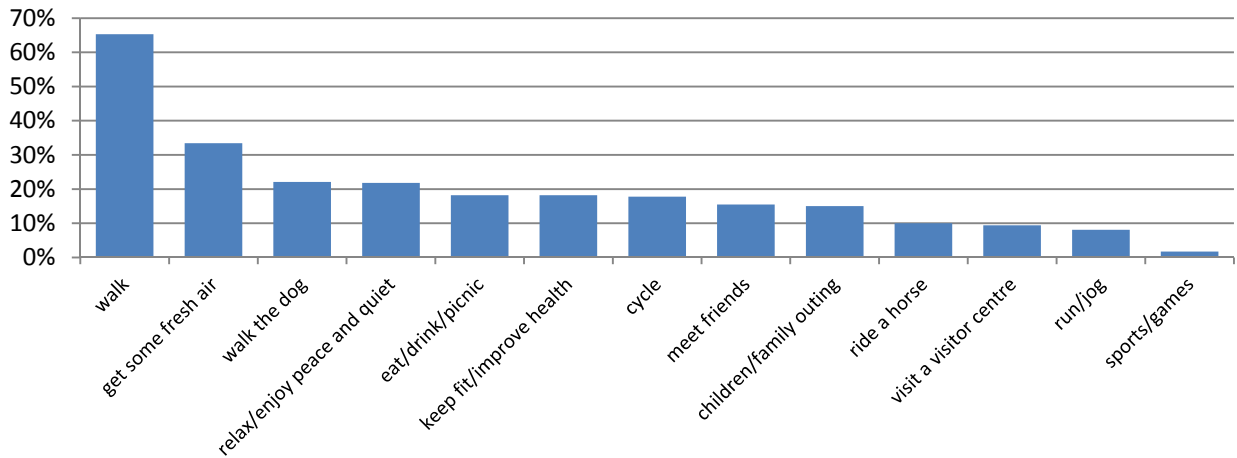
to Epping Forest, with the majority being daily or weekly visits, suggesting amenity and local users. Over a quarter of visitors visit two or three times a year or fewer, indicating that a fair proportion of people on the Forest may in fact be leisure or day trip visitors. This may demonstrate the growing sense of Epping Forest as tourist attraction as this has increased from 10% in the 2010 survey for example.

5.2 What people do when they visit

Most people completing the questionnaire take part in fairly passive activities such as taking a walk, getting some fresh air or enjoying the natural environment. Figure 14 illustrates that a considerable number of visits are also made by those taking part in more active recreational pursuits such as cycling, running, horse riding and dog walking. Cycling and dog walking are both well represented and at a few percentage points higher than recorded during the observation survey.

Horse riding was significantly higher than recorded during the observational survey, suggesting a higher percentage of horse riders complete the questionnaire survey than other user groups. Those partaking in physical activities such as these were much more likely to be frequent visitors, and of those who visit daily, over 50% also said that they walked their dog when visiting.

Figure 14 - What people say they normally do when visiting Epping Forest*

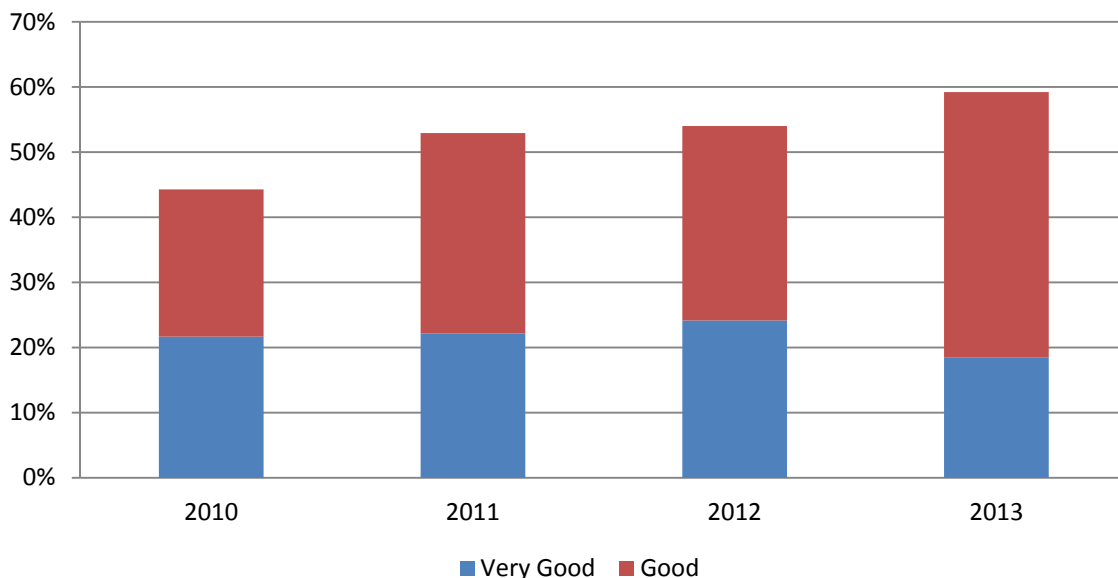


* (Respondents can select up to 5 answers)

5.3 Rating Access

The 1,085 respondents to the survey generally rated access on the Forest positively. Figure 15 shows the increase in visitor ratings of their ability to find their way around the Forest, with a greater number rating this as good to very good year on year. This has occurred over the same period as the installation of seven way-mark trails around the Forest.

Figure 15 - Improvements in ability of visitors to find their way around Epping Forest

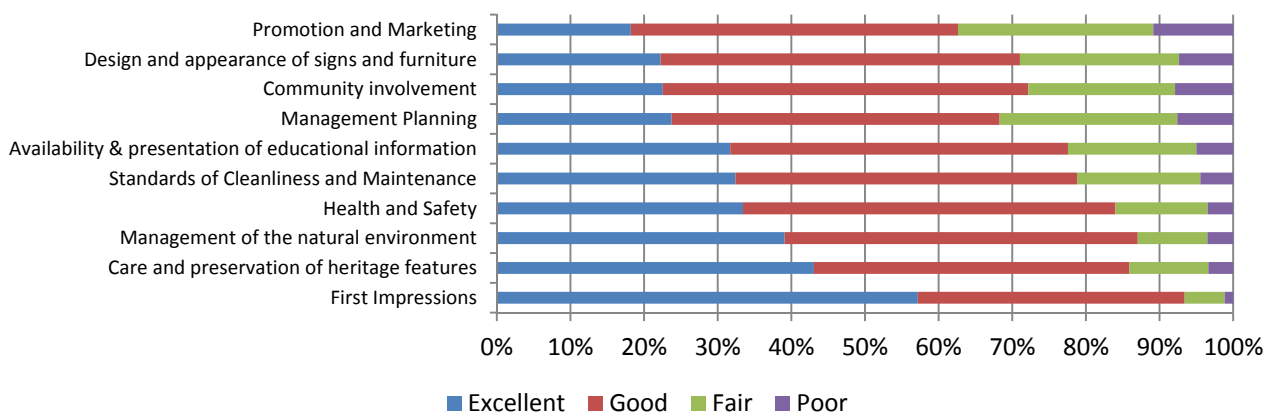


Other access related ratings were generally positive, with a minor reduction in those rating 'use of car parks' and 'taking a rest' as difficult over previous years, but also a slight increase in those rating 'travelling along paths' as fair to difficult. This is perhaps a result of the excessively wet weather over the survey period.

5.4 Rating of organisational activity

Figure 16 shows how people perceive the Forest and the activities of CoL to improve it. Responses are shown to be largely favourable; in particular people's first impression of the Forest is very positive. A considerable number of respondents answered 'don't know' to questions such as rating health and safety and management planning; these were removed from the results shown in figure 16. Nearly all areas showed an increase in ratings of good to very good amongst the public when compared with the last three years surveys. Community involvement has shown noticeable improvement and people's confidence in management planning has increased significantly as levels of public consultation and available information have increased. Promotion and marketing has also shown marked improvement on 2010-12 ratings, but as the only factor with below 20% rating of very good, there is still room for improvement.

Figure 16 - Rating of organisational activities on the Forest



5.5 Nuisance

A large majority of respondents found no nuisance on the Forest (60%). The other issues raised remained largely at similar levels as for 2012 with cyclists (9.6%), dog control (9.2%) and litter (9.8%) all receiving regular mentions. Dog fouling and horse riders remained low at around 2%, and again many of the issues raised were conflicts between the different user groups of cyclists, horse riders and dog walkers. Another issue often mentioned was anti-social behaviour around the use of car parks, the profile of which may have been raised after recent media attention.



Dog walking is a popular activity on the Forest



Illyria open air theatre performances were some of the many popular events held on the Forest in 2013

5.6 Rating of Facilities

Facilities provided by the Forest were again rated well by the public, as they have been for the life of the survey. The visitor centres especially were rated as good to very good by 85% of those who gave a response. Events, information and provision for children and families were rated well and there were minor improvements in the perception of visitor safety on the Forest with fewer people rating this as poor. Food and beverage options were popular with many people listing Butler's Retreat (opened in July 2012) as their favourite location. There were also a number of mentions for the various tea huts around the Forest

with the Fairmead, High Beach and Wanstead Park tea huts being the most frequently mentioned.

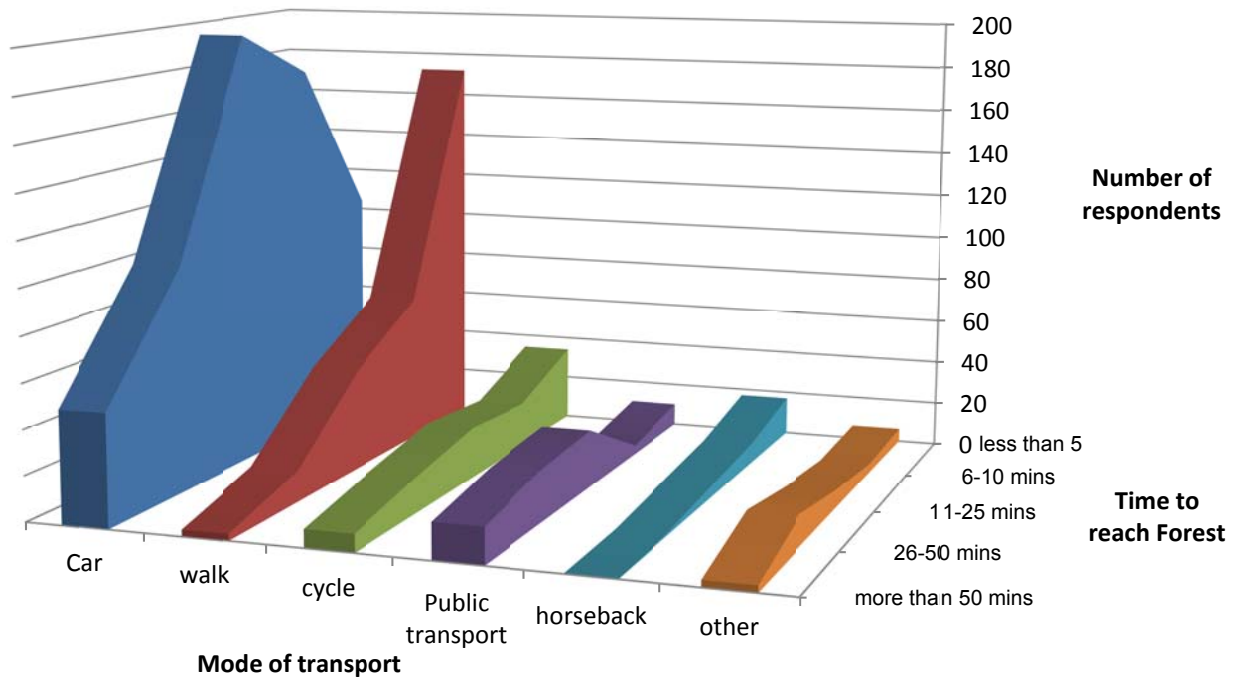
5.7 Transport

When travelling to the Forest the majority of visitors either arrived by car or walked. For journeys of less than five minutes to the Forest, walking was the most popular method of travel, but this tailed off drastically as the journey time increased. Arriving by car was still by far the most common form of transport and remains particularly important for those over 65, used by over 56% of people in this category, and those between 5 and 15 (65%). Use of public transport increases the longer it takes to get to the Forest but has remained at about the same level as previous surveys, as has cycling and horseback riding. Figure 17 shows the profile of the various transport modes for reaching the Forest and the times taken. Car use has also stayed at exactly the same level as 2012 (53% of visitors). In future we hope this will reduce further; we promote the use of more sustainable transport to the Forest through projects such as the shuttle bus between Chingford and High Beach which ran successfully in 2012.



Cycling is still a popular form of transport around the Forest

Figure 17 - Transport mode and time taken to reach the Forest



5.8 Encouraging visitors

When asked what would encourage them to visit the Forest more often, 39% of respondents answered that they were happy with the current provisions. More signage (20%) and more organised events (19%) were the most common requests, both of which the City of London are working hard to improve. We have added way-marked trails around nine locations in the Forest and promote an extensive list of events every year via our Events Diary. More seats and better dog controls were also regularly mentioned as areas for improvement.

5.9 Sources of Information

Most visitors find out information about the Forest and events through word of mouth (51%), the updated CoL Epping Forest website also remained popular (28%) and social media increased on 2012 levels to 8%. The number of people stating they use Forest Focus newsletter as a source of information has dropped slightly but continues to be used by all ages.

5.10 Other comments

The end of the questionnaire survey allows for free comment on the Forest and provides a fascinating and useful insight on both positive and negative user experiences and the wide range of factors that can influence a visitor's enjoyment.

The majority of responses emphasise the pleasure and satisfaction that visitors gain from their time in the Forest:

'First impression of such a wild and vast wildlife habitat which is the Epping Forest - incredible, unique and beautiful enclave within London'

'Very grateful for the work that is done by the Forest Conservators to maintain and retain such an important public space. We are very fortunate to have it on our doorsteps!'

'The access improvements are Connaught Waters are absolutely fabulous - for someone who has difficulty in walking, there's nowhere else like it. Thanks you to everyone who made that happen.'

As with previous surveys, there was a definite split between visitors who emphasised the need for increased facilities such as seating and those who raised concerns about the over-management of the Forest:

'You are turning the Forest into a suburban park! Stop over managing it and providing 'facilities''

'I do not like the way the Forest is being spoilt by car parks and the like which spoil the natural environment. The forest is a forest and not a park. The Forest is being over-manicured and losing its character.'

'More signage please, and directions from stations in appropriate places. It is easy to get lost.'

'Not enough sign posts on paths, can get lost easily. Need more places to sit'

'Have more consideration for less abled visitors'

Both opinions were represented evenly, and this demonstrates the delicate balance the City of London strives for to maintain the natural aspect while enabling the use and enjoyment of all. This includes facilities such as accessible paths, improved visitor car parks and sign posts at areas of high visitor turnover to ensure that these parts of the Forest are accessible to those who may encounter physical, psychological or social barriers to enjoying the Forest. By focusing these improvements in certain areas, it allows other areas with lower visitor numbers to remain relatively wild and unmanaged.

Lack of bins around the Forest was also raised by a high number of respondents and obviously corresponds to the perception of litter as a nuisance on the Forest:

'The lack of provision for rubbish bins of a suitable size at key locations is terrible.'

'There are no provisions for any bins therefore a lot of rubbish is strewn in the forest!'

Lack of bins for dog waste is also mentioned:

'More dog poo bins please.'

'Just could do with some more bins for dog poo'

This is, in part, due to the need to maintain the natural aspect of the Forest. Though we have bins at key points, such as at car parks, it would be unfeasible to increase these without being incongruous to the natural aspect and to maintain regular collections. Additionally, the provision of bins in more secluded spots could actually result in *more* litter being found on the Forest as a result of spread and disturbance of litter from a concentrated area by wildlife, such as foxes and deer, whereas normally this litter would be binned at a more central location or taken home.

Making all bins multi-use, and therefore suitable for dog waste, is one of the many initiatives the City of London has put in place. Judging by the response, not all users are aware of this multi-use. A dedicated litter picking team operates around the Forest, supported by volunteers and local community groups, which organise regular litter picks.

6. Future of the Survey and how it helps

Using the results and data from the observation and questionnaire surveys, CoL is able to improve its management of Epping Forest. The results feed into action plans for the sites observed in 2013, potentially changing the way they are managed. The usefulness of the survey is becoming more apparent as we begin to re-survey sites following improvement works, as we have done this year with Connaught Water. This dramatically improves our ability to evaluate such works and will also help to inform how we undertake large-scale improvements in the future.

The visitor survey continues to provide Epping Forest with invaluable information which can be of use for a number of staff at CoL. Figure 18 demonstrates one such area of use as visitor density maps produced by the survey are overlaid with tree inspection regimes to assess priority inspection areas for our Tree Safety Zone review. The survey also helps to raise awareness about issues the public encounter and to identify patterns of use that may lead to issues in the future, allowing us to address these well in advance.

Action plans have been produced for the sites surveyed in the first three years of the project and the CoL publicises progress against these targets so far:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforestvisitorsurvey

The actions for the 2012 sites have been added to this and a further progress update will be made available at the start of 2014.

2014 Visitor Surveys

The Epping Forest Visitor Survey would not be possible without the hard work of our dedicated volunteers, who contributed over 60 hours of time, mapping 1,395 visitors and covering a huge 120 miles. They also helped to gather questionnaire responses from 1,083 visitors.

Both the questionnaire and observation survey will be running again in 2014.

New volunteers are welcome to assist with the 2014 program of visitor surveys and if you would like to help out with the 2014 survey or find out more about volunteering, visit:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforestvolunteers to enrol or email epping.forest@cityoflondon.gov.uk.

Observation surveys for 2014 will take place at sites including:

- Warren Plantation & Epping Thicks
- Great Monk Wood
- Fernhills and Trueloves
- Chingford Golf Course
- Warren Hill
- Walthamstow Forest

We will also be re-surveying

- High Beach
- Barn Hoppitt
- Fairmead
- Wanstead Flats, splitting this into two survey routes.

Figure 18 – Tree inspection regime at Barn Hoppitt using visitor density data.



Further details of the observation and questionnaire surveys can be obtained from City of London at Epping Forest.

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What's it all about?

The Visitor Survey began in 2010 and runs every summer.

Volunteers observe visitors along set routes around the Forest - who are you and how are you using the Forest?

1,395 visitors were mapped across eight sites over 60 hours, totalling 120 miles.

Questionnaire Surveys completed by over 1000 people, giving their views about the Forest.



Epping Forest Visitor Survey



The Results: 2013

We estimate the total number of visits* to Epping Forest each year based on:

- Observation Surveys
- Statistics from events and activities, such as football matches and educational visits.

We have now carried out Observation Surveys on 25 out of 30 sites across the Forest, so every year the figure is getting more and more accurate.



The Visitor Survey results show that in **2013, Epping Forest received 4.4 million visits.**

By comparing Visitor Survey data to the Census data for the local area, we can see how our visitors reflect our local community. This ensures we are providing everybody with an opportunity to enjoy the Forest.

* Visits rather than visitors, as many people visit more than once.

The Site

Connaught Water is a popular 'honey pot' site in the centre of Epping Forest.

It is within walking distance of The View visitor hub.

First surveyed in 2010 the area underwent major works in 2012 as part of the HLF Branching Out project:

Car park resurfaced.

Accessible path with benches,

Two picnic areas and new litter bins,

A way marked trail and wild play area,

A boardwalk and three accessible angling platforms.



Epping Forest Visitor Survey Connaught Water



When originally surveyed in 2010, Connaught Water had an estimate of **205,469 visits** per year. In 2013, **330,698** visits were recorded which is an increase of nearly **61%**.

Factors such as the weather have an impact, but this large increase is likely to be from the access improvement works in 2012.

Figure 1: Change in observed visitor ethnicity at Connaught Water 2010-2013 compared to 2011 Census data for Forest centre

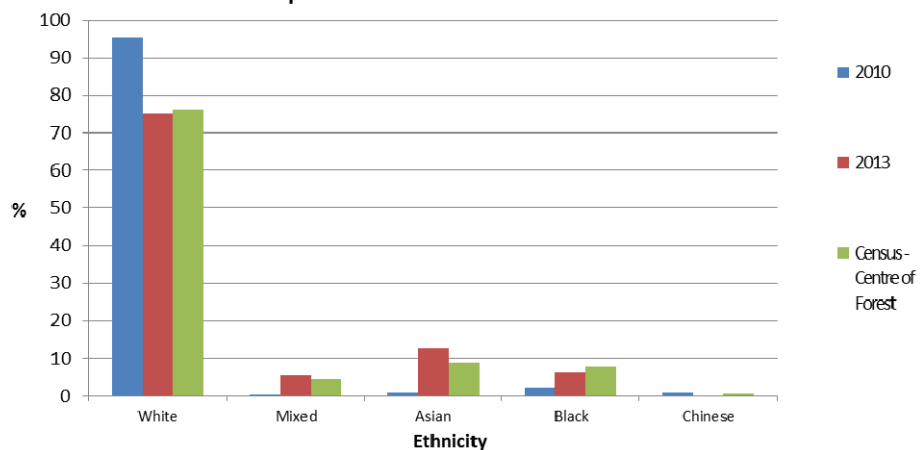


Figure 2 - Density distribution of visitors over 65 at Connaught Water



The 2013 survey shows almost double the number of visitors observed sitting around the site on the new benches. Visitors aged over 65 group around seating areas, as shown in Figure 2.

Plans for the development of Connaught Water

Connaught Water now has a much more diverse visitor profile, better reflecting the local community. Therefore no action is required to improve access in this area in the future.

The Site

Gilbert Slade is in the Southern part of Epping Forest.

It contains the most southerly pollarded trees on the Forest, which are hornbeams.

It is immediately south of the busy A406 and Waterworks roundabout.

To the east and west are densely populated residential areas.

The Hornbeam Trail, a way marked route, links this area with Hollow Ponds.



Epping Forest Visitor Survey Gilbert Slade



The survey results provided an estimate of **76,663 visits** annually. The high level of visitors with a dog (35.5%) and the use of the site by cyclists (18%), runners (4.7%) and young people playing (6%) would indicate that the site is used as an amenity site by the local community rather than as a destination for visitors.

Figure 3 – Cyclists and all visitors at Gilbert Slade



However, when comparing the visitor survey data to that of the census data, under 20's and over 65's were underrepresented at this site.

This could be due to the limited accessibility of the site, the lack of amenities and also the close proximity of Hollow Ponds, one of Epping Forest's busiest sites.

Plans for the development of Gilbert Slade

New access facilities are not required. Gilbert Slade does not have a unique feature to draw visitors, resulting in a lower than expected visitor usage.

It is well used as an amenity site and we will seek to sustain this through the routine management of the area. Any opportunity to improve access should be directed to more popular sites where more people would benefit.

The Site

In the north of the Forest, Hangboy Slade and Jacks Hill have large areas of pollarded Beech, Hornbeam and Oak trees with some heathland.

The site is close to Debden campsite, the Deer Sanctuary and Loughton golf course.

It has a number of bus routes and a couple of car parks for visitors.

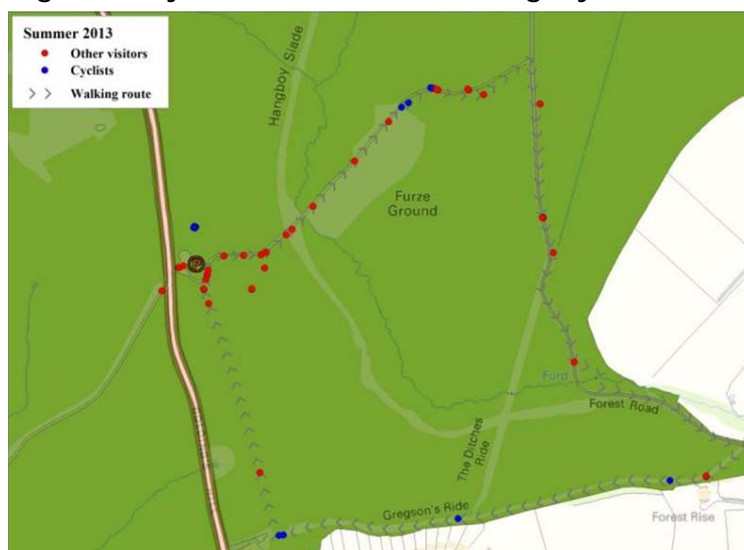


Epping Forest Visitor Survey Hangboy Slade



Results showed the site to be one of the lesser used (bottom 25%), with **56,176** estimated visits per annum. The site was three times busier during the weekend, visitors were largely white (96.6%), which reflects the census data and between 20 - 44 years old (63.6%).

Figure 4 – Cyclists and all visitors at Hangboy Slade



The busiest areas of the site were Broad Strood car park and the junction of Ditches Ride and Green Ride.

Cycling was a hugely popular

activity on this site (33%) along with running (17%). There were also a large number of young people playing on the site and climbing trees (14.8%). These figures could be classed as anomalies as one large group of young people and cyclists were recorded during a weekend survey. For less busy sites a large group can skew the final results.

Plans for the development of Hangboy Slade

New access facilities are not required. Hangboy Slade is a quieter, wilder part of Epping Forest. It is important for wildlife that sites like this remain undisturbed.

We will seek to sustain this through carrying out essential maintenance work with minimum disturbance to the area.

The Site

Hatch Forest is an area of Hornbeam coppice in the centre of Epping Forest, through which the River Ching flows.

There is a sports ground to the west and Woodford Golf Course to the south.

To the north is Whitehall Plain, an open grassland area with scrub and gorse. It links to the popular Barn Hoppitt area.

Several buses routes run around the site.



Epping Forest Visitor Survey



Hatch Forest & Whitehall Plain

The estimate was slightly lower than expected at **72,818 visits** per annum, with weekend visits three times higher. The use of the site by cyclists (39.9%), dog walkers (29%) and runners (11.6%) shows it has a variety of uses for recreational and amenity activities.

Figure 5 – Dog walkers and all visitors at Hatch Forest & Whitehall Plain



As with other survey areas, Figure 5 shows dog walkers mainly using the open grassland areas of the site. Visits to the site by those aged under 20 were significantly lower than the local census data and there was a gender disparity with 65.2% of visits by males.

The busy Whitehall Road bisects the two areas and the bridge over the River Ching floods during the winter months both of these issues restrict access for all visitors.

Plans for the development of Hatch Forest & Whitehall Plain

As part of the Forest Transport Strategy improvements to the crossing of Whitehall Road are being investigated by the London Borough of Redbridge to improve safety. The bridge over the River Ching will be inspected and improved to allow year round access. Hatch Forest and Whitehall Plain are well used as an amenity site and we will seek to sustain this through the routine management of the area.

The Site

Situated in the north of the Forest, Honey Lane Quarter is a steeply-sloping west-facing site.

It is made up of mainly pollarded woodland with a grassy plain to the south.

The site has two well-surfaced multi-user trails and a prominent viewing point.

Several bus routes service this area and there are car parks at the northwest and south of the site.



Epping Forest Visitor Survey Honey Lane Quarters



We estimate **54,203 visits** per year to Honey Lane Quarters. The highest density along this route was at the car park and was mainly pub users.

As with most of our sites, it is over three times busier at weekends. Cycling was very popular here (35.2%) and they tended to use the Forest track parallel to Wake Road instead of cycling along the road. Visitors appeared diverse, 22% of whom were Asian. The site was slightly underused by those under 20.

Figure 6 – Density of all visitors at Honey Lane Quarters



Figure 6 demonstrates how visitors tend to stick to the surfaced trails and paths around the Forest.

It shows that very few people using the unsurfaced tracks in woodland areas in the northern part of the survey route.

Plans for the development of Honey Lane Quarters

During 2014 the Epping Forest Car Park Review will address the use of Honey Lane Car Park along with the rest of the car parks on the Forest with an aim to improve access for visitors. Honey Lane Quarters is a quieter, wilder part of Epping Forest. It is important for wildlife that sites like this remain undisturbed. We will seek to sustain this through carrying out essential maintenance work with minimum disturbance to the area.

The Site

Situated in the north of the Forest, St Thomas's Quarter borders Honey Lane Quarter.

Made up of mature beech woodland and, as a quieter part of the Forest, a popular refuge for timid fallow deer.

There is a riding school and stables nearby.

A bus route services this area and there is also a car park



Epping Forest Visitor Survey St Thomas's Quarter



Figure 7 - the distribution of all visitors at St Thomas's Quarter



St Thomas's Quarter has a very low annual visitor estimate of **32,654**. With a riding school and stables nearby, the site is popular with horse riders (15.3%) and the presence of cyclists (22.2%) and visitors with dogs (15.3%) shows that the area is well used by a diverse range of visitors.

34.7% of observed visitors are aged under 20. This is higher than the local census data and presumably a result of the nearby riding school, as the majority of under 20s were also horse riders. The ethnicity of observed visitors was also quite diverse compared to similar sites in the north of the Forest. Again, probably a result of the riding stables.

Lodge Road car park has been closed intermittently to discourage fly-tipping, which occurs regularly at this site. This may have reduced the visitor numbers to the area.

Plans for the development of St Thomas's Quarter

St Thomas's Quarter is a quieter, wilder part of Epping Forest. It is important for wildlife that sites like this remain undisturbed. We will seek to sustain this through carrying out essential maintenance work with minimum disturbance to the area.

The Site

Wake Valley in the north of the Forest is made up of beech woodland and heathland habitats.

It is within the Special Area of Conservation, designated as a special habitat with a high number of beech pollards.

There are no public transport links for this area but there is a car park just across the busy Epping New Road.



Epping Forest Visitor Survey Wake Valley



With an estimate of **41,364** annual visits, Wake Valley has a similarly low level of visits to the nearby Honey Lane Quarter and St Thomas Quarter.

Figure 8 - Density Distribution of all visitors at Wake Valley



The highest areas of use were around the car parks, at Rushey Plain and Wake Valley Pond, as shown in Figure 8.

There are no surfaced paths through the majority of this site, which can make it difficult for visitors to cross, especially near to ponds or in wet weather.

Visitors were mainly White, but with an age range close to the census. Fishing and sitting were popular activities especially around the Pond or on the Plain enjoying picnics in the sun.

Plans for the development of Wake Valley

Wake Valley is a quieter, wilder part of Epping Forest. It is important for wildlife that sites like this remain undisturbed. We will seek to sustain this through carrying out essential maintenance work with minimum disturbance to the area.

The Site

Woodford Green in the central part of the Forest is a stretch of well-used amenity grassland running alongside the busy Woodford High Road.

The short mown grass is attractive to families and groups of young people for football, picnics and other social activities.

The area includes Woodford Cricket Club and is surrounded by housing with a school and shops nearby.

Well serviced by buses and a nearby tube station.

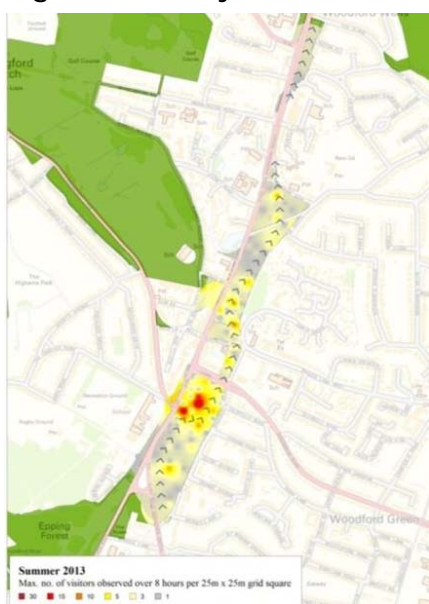


Epping Forest Visitor Survey Woodford Green



An estimated **283,270** visits were recorded at this site, the majority of which were functional rather than leisure related. The busiest period 7.30am – 9am on weekdays, consisted mainly of people crossing the Green on their way to work or schools, especially students at Woodford County High School for Girls. 5 - 15 year olds at this time of day accounted for 11.7% of the total visitor count for the whole eight hour survey period (or 46% of all observed). Unsurprisingly, most were female and a range of ethnicities.

Figure 9 - Density distribution of all visitors at Woodford Green



Recreational use is more apparent at the weekend. The cricket pitch accounted for the majority of visits with 24.2% of all visitors either watching or playing. Figure 9 shows the high distribution of visitors on and around the cricket pitch and of those through-routing to work or school.

Plans for the development of Woodford Green

With such a high number of visits Woodford Green is the ideal place to raise the profile of the Forest. This will be achieved through installing an information panel and through two events which will be held on the Green at a weekend.

Tracks and paths will be opened up and encroaching vegetation removed to encourage visitors to go around the Green as well as across it.

The Whole Forest

We have estimated the percentage of visits each area receives:

South 33%
Central 49%
North 18%

Visits to just six sites - Wanstead Flats, Wanstead Park, Chingford Plain, Connaught Water, High Beach Pillow Mounds and Hollow Ponds - account for **46%** of all visits.

20% of all visits include a dog.

Active pursuits (cycling, running, cricket, football, etc.) account for **21%** of all visits to the Forest, proving its value as a resource for improving health and fitness.



Epping Forest Visitor Survey Conclusions



We can compare the survey results from the last four years across the whole of the Forest. Areas to the south of the Forest, with a much higher local population, are predictably popular, as are areas around honey pot sites such as Connaught Water, High Beach and the Chingford Hub.

Most sites in the north of the Forest are low in visit numbers, a result of their remoteness, reduced accessibility by public transport and the sparser population in these areas.



The use and popularity of honeypot destinations on the Forest represents the success of visitor management measures as larger numbers of people were attracted to sites with improved facilities.

Increased seating and better paths, at Connaught Water for example, make sites much more resistant to erosion and damage from higher footfall than other more sensitive sites would be. The developments therefore help to conserve the wider Forest by attracting visitors to more accessible locations.

The success of the Visitor Survey project is due to the dedication and commitment of the volunteers who deliver it. A big thanks to them and long may it continue! The 2014 survey begins in April!

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject:	Public
Epping Forest Planning Casework - 2013/14	
Report of:	For Information
Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 11/14	
Summary	
<p>The land surrounding Epping Forest continues to be subject to intense development pressure. With its crescent form and sinuous 203.5 kilometre boundary, the Forest is particularly susceptible to impacts from poorly conceived development. The successful protection of the Forest relies heavily on the Town and Country Planning System, and particularly the Metropolitan Green Belt designation. The Conservators remain staunch supporters of this widely adopted planning protection.</p> <p>This report provides information on planning applications and pre-planning consultations made on behalf of your Committee, which seek to protect the context, character and setting of Epping Forest from further environmental damage.</p> <p>Some 91 planning applications have been considered on your Committee's behalf. Objections were made to 28 applications. From these applications 28% have been refused or withdrawn, 32% have been granted permission, four applications remain undecided and the remaining three applications were for pre-application advice. The 28% refused or withdrawn level compares with national statistics for 2012/2013 which show a 13% refusal rate.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
Members are asked to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the report. 	

Main Report

Background

1. The Epping Forest Acts of 1878 and 1880 appointed the City of London Corporation to act as the Conservators of Epping Forest with specific duties to keep the Forest "*un-inclosed and unbuilt on*" reflecting the acute development pressures from a growing capital and to "*protect the natural aspect*" which was an early expression of protected landscape designation.
2. The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 introduced mandatory controls on most classes of development. The key protected landscape designations introduced in the subsequent National Parks and Access to the Countryside

Act 1949 accorded specific protection to England's 10 National Parks and 35 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty within the planning system. The early Victorian Conservancies of Ashdown Forest; Epping Forest; Malvern Hills; and Wimbledon and Putney Commons established before this legislation do not directly enjoy similar protection.

3. Beyond ownership by the Conservators, Epping Forest has had to rely on Planning Policy developed by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) for its further protection, particularly Metropolitan Green Belt designation. Epping Forest coincides with the jurisdictions of four LPAs – Epping Forest District Council; and the London Boroughs of Newham Redbridge and Waltham Forest and Essex County Council, which retains some strategic planning responsibilities.

Green Belt

4. Epping Forest District Council has the third highest proportion of Green Belt land of all local authority areas in England. Recent Government figures show 93.5% of the area has Green Belt status protecting it from development. In its Planning our Future – Issues and Options Consultation Document 2012, the District Council states clearly that *“there will have to be some release of Green Belt land adjoining settlements to meet the needs for housing and employment growth in the period up to 2033.”*
5. Officers have been involved in six pre-planning consultations involving Green Belt land for housing that will impact on the Forest, meeting directly with the developers for three of the sites at Latton Priory, Stonards Hill and North Weald:
 - 5.1. **Latton Priory** - South of Harlow, potential to deliver up to 2,500 homes over the next 20 years.
 - 5.2. **North Weald Bassett** - A Masterplanning study for the village and the airfield.
 - 5.3. **Stonards Hill, Epping** – approximately 150 new homes.
 - 5.4. **Forest Lodge, Epping Road** – 19 homes.
 - 5.5. **Pick Hill, Waltham Abbey** – Pickfield Nurseries, 90 homes + community facility
 - 5.6. **Lippitts Hill** – The Elms Caravan Park, 13 new residential mobile homes in place of existing use of holiday caravan & camping park.
6. The Conservators continue to seek to influence Planning matters by making comments on public consultations for Local and Regional Plans and through scrutiny and comment on planning applications with regard to development.
7. Such development may have a negative impact on the Forest with regard to the intensification of development, traffic generation, changes in local character and environmental impact.
8. The Conservators are not currently a statutory consultee within the planning process, and therefore LPAs are not obliged to consult the Conservators

regarding applications for planning permission that may affect the Forest, its 203.5 kilometre boundary and its immediate environs. However, there are requirements for LPAs to serve notice of certain planning applications on any adjoining owners and occupiers in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 as amended. The weekly scrutiny by your officers of the four LPA planning lists provides the basis from which formal responses are made to the relevant LPAs.

Update on Outstanding 2013 Planning Decisions

9. The following applications were outstanding in my previous report to your Committee on 13 May 2013:
 - 9.1. EFDC – 186 Forest Road, Loughton – Appeal lodged for yoga and Pilates studio - **Refused**
 - 9.2. EFDC – Pretloves – Demolition of existing buildings and erection of two dwellings - **Granted**
 - 9.3. LBWF – 130 Bluehouse Road, E4 – Two-storey extension – **still outstanding**
 - 9.4. 22 South Avenue, E4 – Demolition of existing house and erection of six houses - **Withdrawn**.

Current Position

10. Application Numbers: between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014 a total of 91 planning applications have been considered with the breakdown indicated.

Local Authority	Applications considered	Returned Consultation
Epping Forest District Council	68	22
London Borough of Redbridge	11	2
London Borough of Waltham Forest	12	4
London Borough of Newham	0	0

11. Of the 28 applications upon which the City has commented, nine were granted (32%) (Including one on appeal), six refused (21%), two (7%) were withdrawn and eight (28%) remain outstanding. The remaining three were requests for pre-application advice.
12. The latest General Development Control Return statistics up to September 2013 shows that across England, 455,000 planning applications were submitted with 87% of applications granted. The figure of 28% refused or withdrawn compares favourably with the national figure of 13%.
13. 11 of the applications considered are for a range of highly individual proposals. 14 of the applications considered were for either demolition of existing buildings with replacement dwellings or for whole new residential developments.

14. This year only three applications were considered for house extensions. This is a similar trend to last year when also only three applications were considered the “traditional” application consisting of extensions. This in part though, may be due to a relaxation of the planning rules brought in on 9 May 2013 allowing larger loft conversions and extensions on houses without needing to get permission from local planning officers. It doubled the permitted length of extensions to eight meters for detached homes and six meters for others. These relaxed rules are in place until 30 May 2016.
15. A list of all applications which were subject to a response is included at Appendix 1. The eight applications considered to have a tangible detrimental impact on the Forest and its Buffer Lands are summarised below;
 - 15.1. **Woodside, Thornwood** - change of use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes for 1 no. gypsy pitch together with the formation of additional hard-standing, a stable building and a utility/dayroom ancillary to that use – **Refused – Appeal pending** (EFDC).
 - 15.2. **Sainsbury’s Waltham Point Distribution Centre** - Variation of Section 106 Legal Agreement in respect of HGV delivery vehicle movement routing restrictions – **Granted** (EFDC).
 - 15.3. **Knolly’s Nursery, Pick Hill, Waltham Abbey** – 105 residential units, amenity areas and community facility with shop – **Refused** (EFDC).
 - 15.4. **Picks Farm, Sewardstone Road** - school, 308 dwellings and associated infrastructure – **Outstanding** (EFDC).
 - 15.5. **The Elms Caravan Park, Lippitts Hill** – Pre-application enquiry for change of use of the existing holiday caravan park that is currently open for the period 1st March – 31st October, to a mobile home park with an additional 13 new residential mobile homes (EFDC).
 - 15.6. **Pickfield Nurseries, Pick Hill** – Pre-application enquiry for 90 dwellings and community facility (EFDC).
 - 15.7. **Forest Lodge, (nr. Wakes Arms) Epping Road** – Pre-application enquiry for 19 residential units (EFDC).
 - 15.8. **Forest Court, Chingford, E4** - demolition of existing garages and construction of two x 3 bedroom dwelling houses including room in the roof – **Refused** (LBWF).

2013 / 2014 Consultations

16. Epping Forest District Council - The Conservators have taken the opportunity to meet with members of the Forward Planning Team for a general discussion about their forthcoming Local Plan. We were advised that there is a need to identify an evidence based, objectively assessed, housing need figure for the District and we were also advised that it is very likely that some Green Belt

land would need to be developed, but that Green Belt release would need to be considered in a way which avoided fragmentation and a loss of openness, and established long-term defensible boundaries. A draft Plan (preferred options) preparation and sustainability appraisal is due for public consultation from 31 May 2014.

17. London Borough of Waltham Forest – The Local Plan Development Management Policies were adopted in November 2013. This document as well as the Council’s Core Strategy which was adopted in 2012, now has policies specifically recognising the strategic importance, contribution and significance of Epping Forest in the Borough.
18. Liaison has also continued with various organisations over the Northern Access Gateway Package (NGAP) a proposal by London Borough of Enfield, arising from its North East Enfield Area Action Plan (NEEAAP), which is seeking the regeneration of the Enfield Lock/Enfield Highway/Ponders End/Turkey Street/Southbury corridor through improved transport measures. The most controversial element of NGAP is a proposal to link the A1025 Mollison Avenue in Enfield to the A121 Waltham Abbey bypass effectively diverting Enfield’s traffic via J26 adjacent to Epping Forest.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. **City Together** – The Epping Forests Division’s responses to the development planning process match the City Together vision of a “World Class City” one theme of which seeks to protect, promote and enhance our environment with a specific objective of “conserving and enhancing biodiversity.
20. **Open Spaces Department Business Plan** – Specifically it meets the Open Spaces Department’s Business Plan by;
 - 20.1. Promoting knowledge and appreciation of the environment and protecting the Open Spaces for future generations.
 - 20.2. Extending partnership-working and developing closer links with the local authorities.
21. **Epping Forest Management Plan** – Epping Forest seeks greater protection from encircling development which would isolate it from surrounding countryside and increase the penetration of noise and pollution into its open spaces. This report exemplifies the need to remain vigilant and active in responding to development planning and change in order to protect the “natural aspect” of the Forest. This work seeks to encourage the Forest’s LPAs to share the long-term vision set out in the Epping Forest Management Plan.

Implications

22. **Financial** – there are no direct financial implications from commenting on planning applications and strategy documents, apart from officer time allocations met by local risk expenditure. However, in the event of appeals which go to a planning inquiry there will be financial implications if the

Conservators wish to take part and decide to instruct Counsel / appoint consultants. No external planning consultancy advice was commissioned on third party development during the report period.

23. **Legal** – responses to planning consultations have been made on behalf of the City, as Conservators of Epping Forest with the aim of protecting the Forest environment and to preserve its amenity and character for public enjoyment, according to the Epping Forest Acts 1878 and 1880, and where your Committee works in partnership with others including national government agencies.
24. **Property** – Review and comment upon local planning applications, and objecting to them where necessary is an important part of the proper management of the Forest, to protect its amenity and character.

Conclusion

25. Land surrounding Epping Forest continues to be subject to intense development pressure. In order to protect the context and setting of Epping Forest and its overall environmental condition, the Conservators continue to object to planning applications which are considered to pose significant threats to the Forest environment, and to lobby LPAs for the full representation of Forest interests as they revise their Local Plans.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – List of Planning Application responses by site name

Background Papers:

SEF 12/13

Sue Rigley

Land Agency & Planning Officer

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Appendix 1

Planning application Number	Address	Proposal	Decision
EPF/0329/13	Fernhall Farm, Fernhall Lane	Demolition of existing barn and the erection of two detached dwelling houses with two detached double garages	Granted
EPF/0197/13	Three Horseshoe Farm, Lippitts Hill	Demolition of existing barn and the erection of two detached dwelling houses with two detached double garages	Withdrawn
EPF/0447/13	Green View, Bury Road, E4	Conversion of existing dwelling house and pool house into six self-contained flats	Refused / Granted on appeal
EPF/0283/12	Woodside, Thornwood, North Weald	Change of use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes for 1 no. gypsy pitch together with the formation of additional hard-standing, a stable building and a utility/dayroom ancillary to that use	Refused / Appeal outstanding
EPF/0394/13	Netherhouse Farm	Change of use of existing training centre building to a restaurant	Granted
EPF/0901/13	Sainsbury's Waltham Point Distribution Centre	Variation of Section 106 Legal Agreement in respect of HGV delivery vehicle movement	Granted
EPF/1377/13	Birch Hall Farm, Theydon Bois	Single storey outbuilding	Granted
EPF/1644/13	Land at Kings Green, Loughton	CCTV	Subsequently granted when told Kings Green unavailable
EPF/1779/13	Pound Field, Bell Common	Ménage	Granted

EPF/1784/13	Knolly's Nursery, Pick Hill	105 residential units, amenity areas, community facility with shop	Refused
EPF/1981/13	23 Bell Common, Epping	2 storey side extension	Refused on appeal
EPF/1962/13	Golden Row, Mott Street	Approval of conditions	Partially approved
EPF/2036/13	Ripley Grange, Debden Lane	1 dwelling	Refused
EPF/2659/13	Oak Hill Farm, Theydon Bois	Perimeter fence	Refused
EPF/2610/26 11/ 13	Theydon Bois Tennis Club	4 x floodlight columns or 8 x floodlight columns	Outstanding
EPF/2585/13	89 High Road, Loughton	Demolish house - 10 x 1 bedroom flats incorporating a number of dormer windows, two of which overlook the Forest.	Outstanding
EPF/0275/14	Three Horseshoe Farm, Lippitts Hill	Demolition of existing barn and the erection of one detached dwelling houses with one detached garage	Outstanding
EPF/2097/13	Picks Farm, Sewardstone Road	School, 308 dwellings, village hall, health centre and associated infrastructure	Outstanding
EF2013\EN Q\01482	Pickfield Nurseries, Pick Hill	Pre-application enquiry for 90 dwellings and community facility.	N/A
EF2014\EN Q\00098	Forest Lodge Motel, Epping Road (nr. Wakes Arms)	Pre-application enquiry - Demolition of existing warehouse & motel - 19 residential units	N/A
EPF\ 2014\ENQ\0 0025	The Elms Caravan Park, Lippitts Hill	Pre-application enquiry for change of use of the existing holiday caravan park that is currently open for the period 1st March – 31st October, to a mobile home park with an additional 13 new residential mobile homes.	N/A

LBR/1822/13	45 Mornington Road, E18	External alterations to front driveway access	Granted
LBR/3027/13	92 High View Road, E18	2 x bed house at the rear of 91 High View Road, demolition of existing side garage and erection of new garage amenity	Withdrawn
LBWF/2012/1558	130 Bluehouse Road, Chingford	Two storey ,front, side and rear extensions	Outstanding
LBWF/2013/1731	27 Holly Drive, E4	Ground floor side extension, roof extension at side incorporating front dormer window and two rear roof-lights	Refused
LBWF/2013/2035	Garages, Forest Court, E4	Demolition of existing garages and construction of two x 3 bedroom dwelling houses including room in the roof	Refused
LBWF/2014/0268	2 and 4 Morgan Avenue, E17	Erection of 2 x 2 storey three bedroom houses	Outstanding

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject:	Public
Whipps Cross Roundabout Highway Dedication Scheme	
Report of:	For Information
Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 12/14	
Summary	
<p>Whipps Cross Roundabout (Appendix A) is a major element of the A104/A114 highway infrastructure on Forest Land. The land bounded by the current roundabout was the subject of a Highway Dedication agreement dated 2 June 1939.</p> <p>This report is to appraise members of large scale changes proposed by the current Highway Authority responsible for the dedicated land, the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF).</p> <p>LBWF has been successful in securing a major grant award totalling £30 Million from the Mayor of London which involves the construction of a cycle 'Super Highway' along the Lea Bridge Road (A104) and the redesign of the Whipps Cross Roundabout with protected cycleways and priority traffic lights on Forest Land.</p> <p>The current proposals are contained within the existing dedicated land so impact on the City of London will be limited to some disruption experienced by Forest users and members of staff during the construction of the new junction. The new junction will be significantly different to the existing roundabout and is hoped will result in easier access to the Hollow Ponds and Snaresbrook areas of the Forest for both pedestrians and cyclists residing in LBWF.</p> <p>The report discusses the potential approach the Conservators should adopt to negotiations given the Conservator's previous policy position established in 2009 which resisted dedication of additional Forest Land for commuting cycling infrastructure on Forest Land.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
Members are asked to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report 	

Main Report

Background

1. Forest Land at Whipps Cross, Walthamstow/Leytonstone was the subject of a dedication agreement for Highways Purposes with The Mayor, Alderman and Burgesses of the Borough of Leyton in 1939. The dedication agreement was made in return for a payment of £1,178 (£73,558 at today's prices) rather than a land exchange.
2. In 1939, the Conservators acceded to a request from the Borough of Leyton, as widening the highway and improving the Whipps Cross Road/Lea Bridge Road junction was in the public interest.
3. The London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF), and CoL collaborated with the Olympic Delivery authority and Transport for London on the 'Epping Forest' Olympics Greenway Cycleway in 2009-2012, attracting £364,500 of funding improvements at Leyton Flats.
4. Following the public consultation programme for the Stratford to Epping Forest Cycle Route Inspection and Stakeholder Plan (CRISP) Report, completed in 2008 in preparation for the London Olympics in 2012, the Conservators took a strong policy view that while recreational cycling in the Forest is supported, the Conservators will not dedicate additional Forest Land to facilitate provision for cycle commuting infrastructure especially in the circumstances applicable to the cycle route proposed at that time, where the Conservators considered there was an alternative route available which did not require dedication of additional Forest Land.
5. Whipps Cross roundabout which sits at the head of the Epping Forest Cycleway is the focus of two of Transport for London's cross Borough mapped cycle routes.
6. Cycling on London's main roads has risen by 173 per cent since 2001 (as at 2013). Most of this growth has taken place in inner London, but more than half of all potentially cyclable journeys take place in outer London, according to Transport for London (TfL) research. The Greater London Authority (GLA) intends that the number of journeys made by bicycle over the next 10 years should double.
7. The GLA believe that there are numerous benefits of increasing the number journeys made by bicycle. Improvements cited are to cut overcrowding on public transport, ease congestion, slash pollution and reduce competition for parking spaces.
8. In March 2013, the GLA published, '*The Mayor's Vision for Cycling in London – An Olympic Legacy for all Londoners*'. This document outlined a number of objectives to make cycling on London's road network safer and easier and therefore an attractive mode of travel for more people.
9. On 24 April 2013, the Mayor, Boris Johnson, and TfL announced a £100m fund for which Outer London boroughs were invited to bid, to become "mini-Hollands", boroughs which, in time, aim to become every bit as cycle-friendly as Dutch equivalents; benchmarks of excellence for cycling, and that suburbs and towns all over Britain would want to replicate. The Mini-Holland title

refers to the provision of segregated and protected cycles lanes and the provision of cycle priority at roundabouts.

10. 20 Outer London boroughs were eligible for the mini-Holland competition. London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) was one of the 18 Outer London Boroughs who submitted a bid for 'mini-Holland funding.
11. In March 2014, three outer boroughs were chosen for substantial investment, with very high spending concentrated on a relatively small area for a genuinely transformational impact. The London Boroughs of Enfield, Kingston and Waltham Forest will receive a share of the £100m development fund.

Current Position

12. LBWF was successful in its bid to 'dramatically improve conditions for cyclists around Walthamstow town centre, to help trigger a cycling culture across the whole borough', securing around £30M.
13. The LBWF proposals include 'a new Cycle Super Highway along the length of Lea Bridge Road, with a radical rework of the Whipps Cross roundabout; "home zone" or so called "Woonerf" or 'living street' approach to shared social space in residential areas of Walthamstow and key north-south and east-west linking routes'.
14. The Whipps Cross Roundabout is situated on Forest land dedicated to highway and a 'radical rework' potentially poses an encroachment risk to Forest land.
15. The roundabout currently presents a barrier to cyclists and pedestrians from LBWF who wish to access the Forest safely and easily.
16. Currently, there are no detailed plans for the proposed work. An initial plan for the roundabout rework was submitted as part of the LBWF bid (Appendix B).
17. The initial plan appears to contain the works within the footprint of the existing dedicated land, although there have been many changes to this area over the last 90 years, involving numerous land dedications and the boundary of the dedicated highway land will need to be carefully checked with the proposed work site.
18. The programme contained in the 'mini-Holland' bid is fairly arbitrary;
 - Phase 1 (consultation, engagement and involvement) by 2015,
 - Phase 2 (consultation, engagement and involvement) by 2016 and
 - Phase 3 (implementation) 2017/18.
19. Direct discussions with LBWF Officers indicate that the programme implementation is likely be earlier;
 - Spring 2014 - LBWF and TfL meet to discuss the next priority steps and acquire an understanding on how the funding will be released over the coming years

- 2014/15 - Developing proposals, engaging with key stakeholders and local communities. Possibly physically starting on quick wins in late autumn 2015.
 - Summer of 2016 – Implementation of Whipps Cross Roundabout rework.
20. LBWF Officers have committed to consult with The Conservators at the earliest opportunity, to ensure our support is obtained for the scheme.

Options

21. The current Highway dedication agreement allows the LBWF, as the Highway Authority, the freedom to develop further Highway infrastructure within the bounds of the current Whipps Cross roundabout, subject to Planning controls, for which the LBWF is also the Local Planning Authority. The Conservators of Epping Forest will want to feed into the planning process to communicate Forest user requirements for access, thus engaging constructively with the cycling proposals.

Proposals

22. It is proposed that CoL Officers work with LBWF to develop a scheme which is of mutual benefit for Forest users and cyclists in the LBWF area.
23. This will include, but is not limited to;
- (1) Reviewing our historic documents to develop a definitive plan of the land dedicated for highway purposes, at Whipps Cross Roundabout for use by CoL and LBWF.
 - (2) Assist with the advertising and marketing of the LBWF consultation via CoL web page links and social media channels, encouraging Forest users to have early input.
 - (3) Attend key stakeholder meetings and design reviews, as necessary.
 - (4) Work with LBWF to develop detailed plans for the existing dedicated Forest land and encourages local people to access the Forest by bicycle.
 - (5) Update your Committee with the final detailed plan in due course.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

24. The continued drive for promotion of sustainable transport and healthy lifestyles from the GLA and TfL meets with numerous key CoL aims and objectives.
25. The LBWF proposals address several of 'The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City 2008-14' aims;

- (1)supports our communities - To encourage and support services and initiatives which benefit communities within the City and City fringes, contributing to local prosperity.
 - (2)protects, promotes and enhances our environment - To continue to minimise noise, land and water pollution and improve air quality where this is possible.
 - (3)protects, promotes and enhances our environment - To encourage sustainable forms of transport.
26. The proposed option supports a number of the City's Corporate Strategy and Open Spaces Business Plan strategic aims;
- (1) Quality – Provide high quality accessible open spaces and services in accordance with nationally recognised standards for the benefit of London and the nation.
 - (2) Environment – Adopt sustainable working practices, promote variety of life (biodiversity) and protect Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations.
 - (3) Promotion – promote opportunities to use and enjoy the outdoor environment for health, learning and inclusion and ensure the value of Open Spaces is recognised.
27. The Forest Transport Strategy houses the objective, 'providing improved accessibility to the Forest for all users especially those arriving by public transport or on foot, bicycle or horse-back'.
28. Linked with the 'The City Together Strategy', the City of London's Sustainability Policy states;
- (1) EN 7 – Reduce the negative impact of transport on the environment
 - (2) EN 14 – Protect, maintain and enhance open spaces, and other areas with landscape, wildlife or historical interest on all the property it manages, in partnership with the local community.
 - (3) SO 1 – Enhance and encourage preventative health services, activities and education

Implications

- 29. The overall 'mini-Holland' scheme is expected to cost around £30M, although much of this cost is for works not associated with the Whipps Cross Roundabout improvement.
- 30. It is expected that the Whipps Cross Roundabout improvements will cost £3.5M, funded by the GLA and TfL.
- 31. **Financial** – This report contains no financial implications for the CoL.
- 32. **Property** – This report contains no adverse property implications.
- 33. Officer time may be required to communicate messages via digital media and to attend stakeholder meetings and/or design reviews.

Conclusion

34. The proposed LBWF 'mini-Holland' plans are in line with the CoL's position of both supporting recreational cycling on Forest Land and encouraging sustainable transport methods of access to the Forest, including cycling.
- 35.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Location of Whipps Cross Roundabout
- Appendix B – Basic plan of proposed Whipps Cross Roundabout rework (as shown in the LBWF Mini-Holland Bid)

Background Papers:

CRISP Report

Transport for London and Olympic Delivery Authority proposed cycle route – Epping Forest Route, May 2009

Waltham Forest Council Mini Holland Bid Document, December 2013

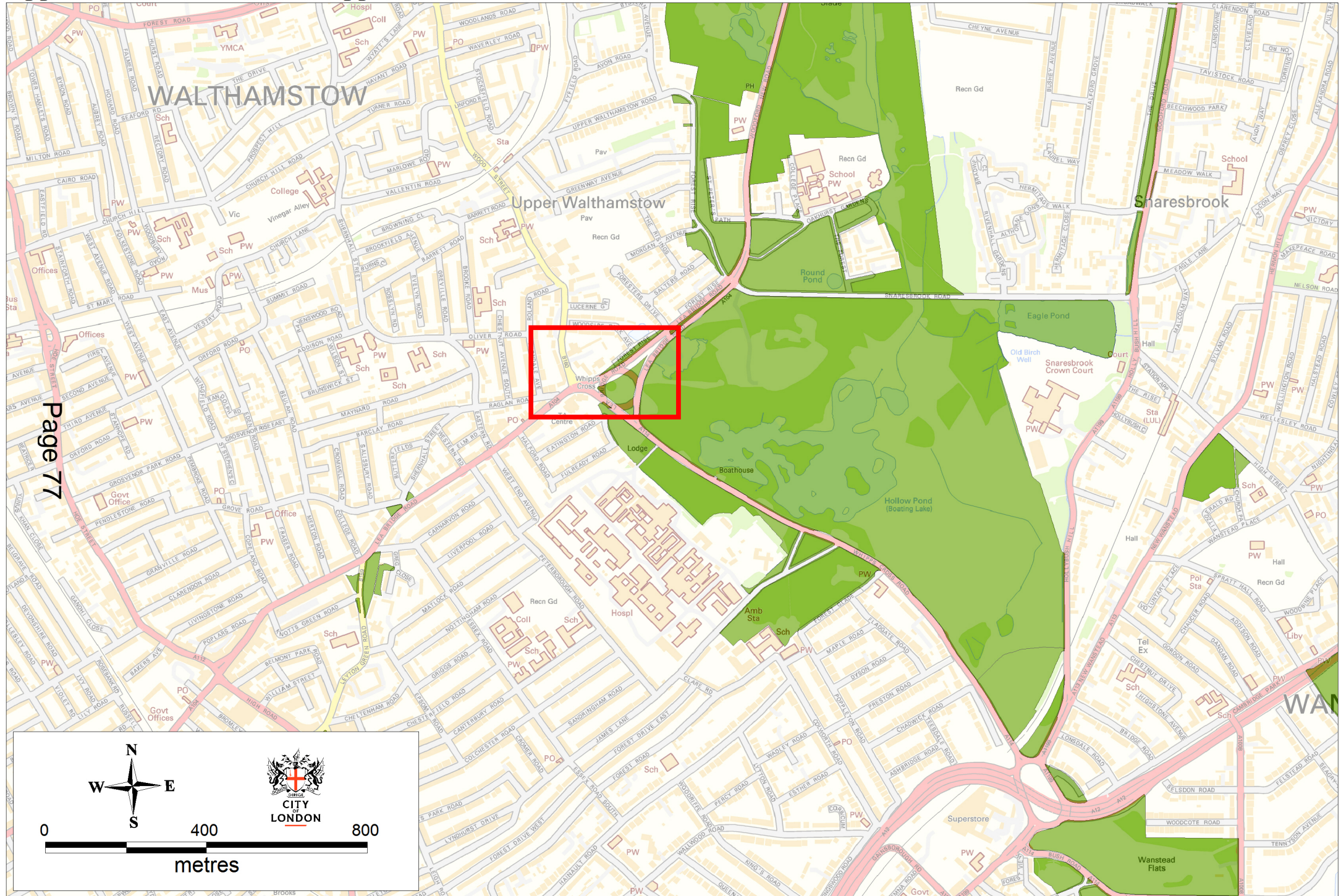
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Appendix 1 - Location of Whipps Cross Roundabout



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Lea Bridge Road, continued



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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject: Annual report of licences issued 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014	Public
Report of: The Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 13/14	For Information
Summary	
<p>This report updates your Committee on the number and variety of licences issued for temporary use of Forest land in the year 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.</p> <p>There have been 227 licences issued for various events, activities and temporary use of Forest Land which together have raised a total of £66,235. The most popular licenses were Filming (73) 32%; Community Events (32) 14% and Fitness Events (27) 12%. A further 485 horse riding licences, which includes annual, weekly and replacement licences, were also issued raising a total of £17,092.00.</p> <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the report 	

Main Report

Background

1. This report is brought to your Committee to provide oversight of current licencing policy and is the first annual report of licences issued on Epping Forest. Requests are received for various services requiring the temporary use of Forest Land. These requests are for a wide variety of events and activities that individuals and companies and property owners wish to carry out on the Forest. The Conservators normally levy a charge on events or activities. When a request is received the details of the event or activity are scrutinised, or in the case of access, a skip or storage, an inspection is carried out by a Forest Keeper in order to ascertain whether a licence should be granted for use of Forest Land in respect of that request.
2. The impact that any event or activity may have on the Forest, or those who use the Forest is always the major consideration in the decision making

process. Consideration is always taken as to the Conservators' duties under the Epping Forest Acts 1878 and 1880 and whether any damage to Forest Land may occur. Where there are very real concerns around damage either a refundable deposit or bond is taken to cover any repairs for damage of Forest Land, or in some cases the licence request is refused.

3. Licence requests are refused for a variety of reasons: some requests are for events that are far too big for the Forest to facilitate such as festivals with expected attendances of several hundred thousand.
4. Requests for event parking on Forest Land, that has previously been approved are now being refused given the conflict with local planning regulations.
5. Charges for events, activities or other services requiring the temporary use of Forest land are set by your Committee by way of an annual report brought to your January meeting. The charges for filming and photography are set by an annual report taken to the Open Spaces Committee.
6. Certain classes of licence currently do not carry a charge, for example charity events and social gatherings. Similarly no charge is made for ecological study licences where the data is made available to the Conservators.

Current Position

7. The types of events and activities requested include filming, photography, fairs, circuses, fitness events, community events, school events, skips, signs, scout events and various miscellaneous activities. There have been 227 licences issued for various events, activities and temporary use of Forest Land which together have raised a total of £66,235. The most popular licenses were Filming (73) 32%; Community Events (32) 14% and Fitness Events (27) 12%. A further 485 horse riding licences, which includes annual, weekly and replacement licences, were also issued raising a total of £17,092.00.
8. Other requests come from the many properties that border, or are enclosed by, the Forest. These properties often have no direct access to the rear of their curtilages or space to place skips; site scaffolding or temporarily store building materials during repair or development works. **See Table 1 below**
9. The licencing system serves two main purposes; one is to manage the impact of licenced events and activities on the Forest and other Forest users. Information as to where and when licenced activities are taking place can be communicated to other users via the Epping Forest web site, twitter and the many email groups that we maintain for this purpose. This enables them to plan around the activity and minimise the impact on their visit.
10. The second purpose is to assist with the cost of maintaining the Forest. The licenced activities provide a regular, steady income which helps meet the cost of the administration of licences. **See Table 2 below**

Options

11. Your Committee's attention is drawn to the fact that the Conservators continue to licence events under the following circumstances:
 - i. Circuses on Forest Land which may contain performing wild animals. This is anticipated to change with the introduction of the Wild Animals and Circuses Bill which will give operators until 1 December 2015 to remove any wild animals from their circus.
 - ii. Concessionary charges of £50.00 are made to students for filming licences on Epping Forest Land.
 - iii. Consideration may also want to be given to the annual licence for the Theydon Bois Donkey Derby, which is now in its 26th Year and acts as an important fundraiser for local charities. The Sunday event includes donkey racing and gambling which are both contrary to the Epping Forest byelaws – Section 3(32) *Disorderly Conduct* – and Section 3(38) – *Racing on the Forest*.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The issuing of licences for the use of Forest land supports the City Together Strategy theme 'A World Class City which protects, promotes and enhances our environment. This is linked to the associated Open Spaces Strategic Aim "Provide safe, secure and accessible Open Spaces and services for the benefit of London and the Nation".

Implications

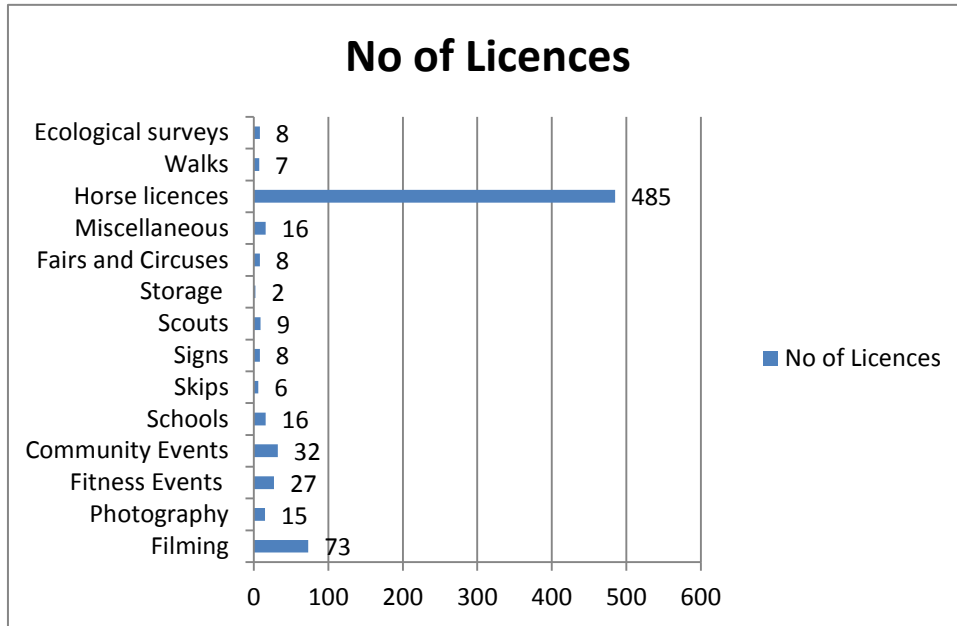
13. **Finance:** The City's Financial Regulations require all departments to recover full costs when setting charges to persons or external organisations, or submit reason to the appropriate service Committee when that objective is not met. It is, therefore, at the discretion of individual spending Committees to determine the actual level of fees and charges relative to the services that provide, after taking into account local considerations and priorities.
14. The total income raised by licenced activity in Epping Forest in 2013/14 amounted to £83,327
15. **Property:** Licensing various 3rd party temporary activities that the City is willing to permit upon the Forest should ensure that the City retains full and proper control of the Forest, can prevent misuse, and has appropriate terms in place to protect the City and the public.
16. **Legal:** the licensing of activities on Forest Land is managed by the Superintendent under delegated powers and reflects the general powers of the Conservators under section 33 – General Powers – and section 30 – Powers to make byelaws – of the Epping Forest Acts of 1878 and 1880.

Licensing also prevents the inadvertent concession of various possessory rights which might otherwise be conveyed in certain circumstances.

Conclusion

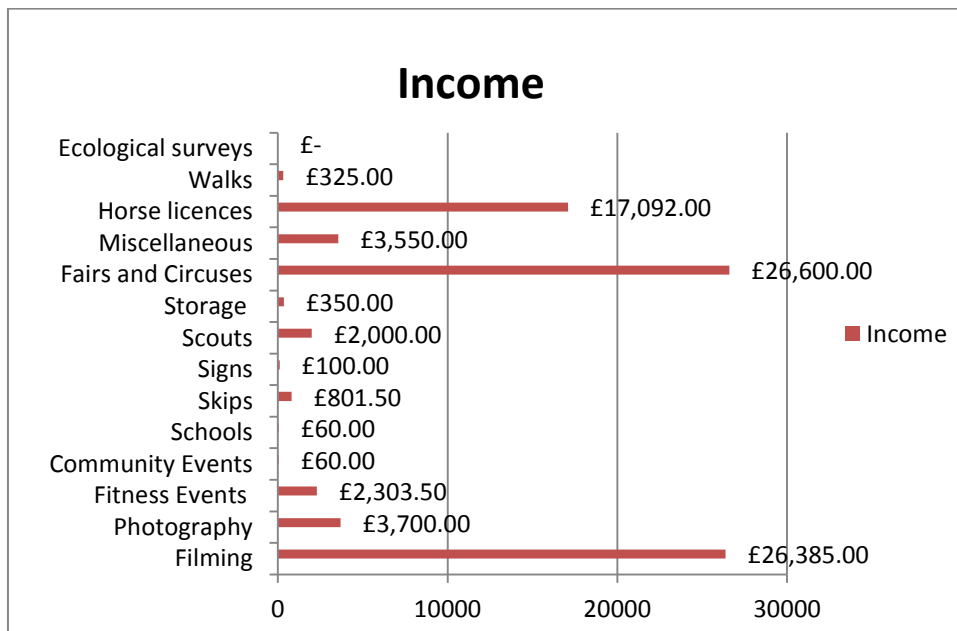
17. The licensing of events and activities on Forest land is necessary to ensure that there is no major impact on the Forest and its users. Also that no possessory rights are conceded and that the use of Forest Land is properly regulated and recognised through a standard charge wherever possible.

Table 1



Miscellaneous includes: Horse riding events, night hikes, fungi forays, military cadet training, temporary airwave mast and golf events.

Table 2



Appendices

- None

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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject: Volunteering in Epping Forest 2013/14	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 14/14	For Information

Summary

This report informs your Committee of progress with the implementation of the Epping Forest Volunteer Strategy, which was adopted on 8 March 2010.

A total of 21,186 hours of volunteer activity were donated during financial year 2013/2014, which includes 10,884 hours from volunteers managed by the City of London; 5,595 hours by the Epping Forest Centenary Trust and 4,707 hours by the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers. This represents a 2.56% decrease in total volunteer hours on 2012/13.

At the end of March 2014, 227 people were volunteering for Epping Forest. 14 of our volunteers fulfil more than one of the 17 available roles. A further 311 people have participated in mass volunteering days. 26 new volunteers were recruited during the year.

The annual Volunteer Party in February 2014 staged at Butler's Retreat was again a great celebration. The Chairman awarded the following medals: Nine Gold (600 hours), seven Silver (300 hours) and seven Bronze medals (150 hours); £14,317 was spent on volunteer materials, equipment, travel and expenses in 2013/14, excluding training course fees.

The budget of £14,317 covered equipment, travel and expenses. City of London volunteers have contributed time equivalent to more than Six full time staff and provide vital match funding for the Heritage Lottery funded Branching Out Project.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- note the content of this report and improvements planned for 2014.

Main Report

Background

1. Many people seek to support their local open space through volunteering, whether by performing specific roles, running activities, or enhancing the natural and heritage conservation value of the Forest or as a way of contributing to the community in which they live. These tasks and related training provide volunteers with new experiences and skills.
2. Volunteering contributes significantly to the management of Epping Forest.

The expansion of volunteering is a key element of your Committee's Volunteer Policy and the five year Heritage Lottery funded Branching Out project, which acts as a catalyst for increasing the number of volunteers engaged across Epping Forest, and integrating them in a more coordinated way, using a dedicated Volunteer Development Officer (VDO) and staff in host teams to manage the process.

Current Position

3. There were 227 volunteers directly managed by the City of London at Epping Forest at the end of 2013.
4. During 2013/14 we recruited 26 new volunteers, exceeding the recruitment target of 14 for the Branching out Project.
5. Working with Visitor Services, two Visitor Services Volunteer Roles were combined and a new role, the Visitor Centres Volunteer, was created. New volunteer role descriptions for Volunteer Administrative Assistant and a Fund Raising volunteer were also created and are now online.
6. Epping Forest's first volunteer administration assistant has been working with the VDO and the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and has started a research project with the Forest Centres Officers. Two other volunteer Admin Assistants have been recruited to help both the Technical Officer and the Forest Operations Manager.
7. Work has also been undertaken with the City of London's web officers to improve the Volunteer webpage. All volunteer tasks for the year are promoted on the web and posters are placed near to the task location two weeks in advance, to advertise the event. Volunteers contribute to the Volunteer website by submitting a Case Study on why they volunteer.
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/volunteering/Pages/default.aspx
8. Working with the Forest Centre Officers, a volunteer recruitment event took place in March specifically aimed at Visitor Services Volunteers.
9. With the Friends of Epping Forest helping the City of London to run the Visitor Centre at High Beech, support has been extended with the design of appropriate paperwork, badges and uniforms.
10. Epping Forest is represented as a member of the Waltham Forest Volunteer Action group and the Open Spaces Volunteer Improvement Group to help improve the ongoing volunteer profile.
11. There are 34 volunteer Risk Assessments and 15 Safe Systems of Work which are updated every year. The updates were completed at the end of January.
12. Epping Forest has been working with all the Volunteer Groups in obtaining relevant insurance cover for the groups as part of a revised Service Level Agreement (SLA). Epping Forest will be supporting the groups with a small grant of up to £500 to help them pay for insurance.

Measuring volunteering

13. At the end of March 2014, 227 people were volunteering for Epping Forest. 14 of our volunteers fulfil more than one of the 17 available roles. A further 311 people have participated in mass volunteering days.
14. There are 6 volunteer conservation groups working in Epping Forest – Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT), Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV), Lakehouse Lake Project (LLP), Wren Conservation Group, Friends of Swaines Green (FOSG), and Bush Wood Conservation Volunteers (BWCV).
15. Epping Forest Volunteers have completed 10,884 volunteer hours in 2013/14, a 19.09% increase on 2012/13. The Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT) completed 5,595 volunteer hours, a 44.8% decrease on 2012/13 and the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV) 4,707 hours, a 4.9% increase on 2012/13 giving a grand total of 21,186 hours for 2013/14. This is a 2.56% decrease on 2012/13, which had a total of 21,730 volunteer hours.
16. The decrease in hours for the EFCT is due to the weather and changes to staffing levels.

Volunteers' contribution to conservation work

17. 2013 has seen Volunteer Fishing Bailiffs carry out the Fish Surveys for the first time alongside the Fisheries Contractor. This has assisted Forest Keepers and allowed them to concentrate on other aspects of their role.
18. The Wren Conservation Group organises a bird count every year on the southern part of the Forest mainly Wanstead Flats and Park. Every year they produce a booklet called The Birds of Wanstead.
19. The Scout Project 2013 was organised by the VDO and the Head of Operations, in conjunction with EFCT. The Scouts undertook a total of four projects consisting of:
 - two conservation tasks clearing Silver Birch, Holly and Gorse;
 - one pond task clearing reeds from Bulrush Pond; and
 - the construction task in Gifford Woods.
20. The task at Gifford Wood involved working with Epping Forest staff to build three culverts, creating public access to the wood. They also installed the posts for the guided walk route and four benches, as well as a French drain to help remove the water from the horse ride. Further public tree planting events also took place totalling 60 volunteer hours.
21. Working in partnership with the Lake House Lake Project saw the installation of pre-established coir rolls and coir pallets around the islands on Jubilee Pond and fencing of the newly planted areas.
22. The Waltham Forest Youth Reparation Services, (WFYRS) has been coming out onto the Forest every other Saturday and running litter picks.

23. The CLO ran a Conservation Task over two days with The Challenge Network. 110 young people volunteered over the two days. He also ran small conservation tasks for several schools.
24. Central Forest Keepers have been running volunteer tasks to clear the ponds at Knighton Wood and Lord's Bushes.
25. Southern Forest Keepers have been working with volunteers in Bush Wood and have helped form a new volunteer group called the Bush Wood Conservation Volunteers. At the moment they are being led by Forest Keepers, but it is hoped that some of them will attend the Volunteer Task Leader Training and take on this responsibility themselves.

Volunteers' contribution to education and events

26. The Lifelong Learning volunteers have been helping the Lifelong Learning Officer organise and run more than 150 learning events.
27. The Junior Anglings, which are run between July and September, have been supported by the Volunteer Fishing Bailiffs. They are events that have always been well attended by the public and normally oversubscribed. In 2013 the fishing Bailiffs helped us organise and run three Junior Angling days.

Ensuring the quality of volunteers' experience

28. The Volunteer Awards Party in February 2014 in Butler's Retreat celebrated further achievements by volunteers. Nine gold (for 600 hours), seven silver (300 hours) and seven bronze medals (150 hours) were awarded. The following volunteers had a special mention at the Volunteer Party;
 - A special thank you from the Chairman went to two of the Happy Loppers group who worked with EFCT. They were both awarded a Gold medal as a thank you for the time they have given to volunteering on the Forest over the years.
 - The Chairman gave a special thank you for the many years of services given by three Animal Rescue Volunteers. They are called upon by Forest Keepers and the Public on many occasions any time of day or night to rescue stricken and injured animals on the Forest.
29. The training of Volunteers and staff has continued, with both staff and volunteers receiving joint training in Brushcutters, Visitor Surveys, Leading Health Walks and Web Editor Training and First Aid.
30. The VDO led 11 Volunteer conservation tasks in 2013; he also ran two, volunteer task leader training days and two task leader assessment days, training 10 volunteers.

Plans for 2014/15

31. The recruitment target for Branching Out in 2014 is 14 new volunteers.
32. Additional training for volunteers in 2014 will include Task Leader and Safe use of Brush Cutters, Excel and Access Database and First Aid.

33. The VDO and the Head of Operations will liaise with the EFCT and the operations team on four projects for the annual Scout Project.
34. For the first time volunteers that work directly for Epping Forest have been trained as Task Leaders. 2014 will see the new Task Leaders, leading 14 out of the 22 Pond and conservation tasks.
35. For the first time the Fishing Bailiffs will be running the Junior Angling days without Forest Keepers. We have increased the amount of days from three to five.
36. Working with Volunteers, further work will be undertaken to improve the Volunteer Webpage to make them more interactive and easier for users to access the information they want.
37. The Volunteer improvement plan is moving forward with the help of volunteer supervisors working group who have met twice in 2013.
38. Additional tasks will be delivered around Jubilee Pond to install further fencing and planting around the islands.
39. The VDO will be working closely this year with the Friends of Swaines Greens, Bushwood Conservation Volunteers and the Waltham Forest Youth Reparation Service, writing and agreeing a Service Level Agreement with them and also running some tasks for them.
40. Due to the success of the Volunteer Task Leader Training in 2013, two additional Task Leader training days will be provided in 2014 for other Volunteer Groups who work on the Forest.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

41. Volunteering and community involvement are included in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2012 – 2015 Strategic Aims to celebrate a sense of place by involving local communities in the care and management of our sites, with objectives to encourage use of the open spaces by underrepresented groups and developing volunteering opportunities at all sites.
42. By promoting volunteering to a more diverse audience and reaching out to specific communities, we are increasing access to our activities in the Forest. This helps meet the Epping Forest Management Plan 2004-2010 objective to improve accessibility to education and enjoyment. Volunteering contributes to two more Management Plan objectives - to enhance the diversity of wildlife habitats and improve recreational activities.
43. The Epping Forest Volunteer Policy aims to create a culture of volunteering which is inclusive, informative, safe, dynamic and fun, while ensuring every volunteer's contribution is effective, recognised and celebrated. The policy encourages participation by people from all walks of life, abilities and ages. Epping Forest is aiming to develop best practice in recruiting, supporting and managing volunteers to maximise the valuable contribution they make to Epping Forest.

44. The Open Spaces Department Volunteer Strategy aims to develop volunteering opportunities and encourage people to volunteer.

Financial Implications

45. All Epping Forest Volunteers are fully covered by the City of London's Employers Liability Policy.
46. Match funding for the Branching Out project is provided by calculating volunteer hours as the equivalent of cash (£50-£350 per day depending on experience). We have exceeded the HLF target of £203,294.14 by £50,143.89 to the end of March 2014
47. In 2013/14, if volunteer hours were charged at equivalent of minimum wage , volunteering by EF volunteers alone was equivalent to 6 members of full time staff.
48. £14,317 was spent on volunteer materials, equipment, travel and expenses in 2013/14.
49. The total budget for 2014/15 is £16,500 from Local Risk, as anticipated in the Volunteering in Epping Forest report approved by Committee in January 2013 Based on the successful recruitment to date, volunteer numbers are likely to rise considerably over the next year.

Conclusion

50. A total of 26 volunteers were recruited during 2013/14 and City of London volunteers completed 10,884 hours during the year. The City of London volunteers have contributed time equivalent to approximately 6 full time staff.
51. The City of London volunteer's time has provided vital match funding for the HLF funded Branching Out Project.
52. Volunteering provides an excellent opportunity for local communities to participate in the care and management of Epping Forest. The volunteer community groups have contributed 10,302 hours during the year. This time is equivalent to approximately 6 full time staff.

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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject: Annual report of Fly tipping and Waste disposal 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 16/14	For Information
Summary	
<p>This report updates your Committee on the number of fly tips and the quantity of litter and rubbish removed from Epping Forest in the year 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. The report also updates your Committee on the cost of disposal of the waste removed from the Forest.</p> <p>There have been 666 fly tips recorded on Forest land which vary from a single black sack of house waste to lorry loads of builders waste; it also includes fly tips of hazardous waste such as asbestos and tyres.</p> <p>Over 325 tonnes of waste have been removed from the Forest comprising of over 160 tonnes taken to London waste, over 100 tonnes of general waste disposed of in skips, over 50 tonnes of mixed recycling and 4.6 tonnes of tyres.</p> <p>The total cost of removing waste from Epping Forest in this reporting year was £212,213.58 made up of £36,156.06 for general waste, £5,066.26 for recycling, £8,602.88 for hazardous waste and £162,388.38 in staff costs.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
Members are asked to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the report 	

Main Report

Background

1. Fly-tipping is ‘the illegal deposit of any waste onto land i.e. waste dumped or tipped on a site with no licence to accept waste’. Fly-tipping is illegal and in the UK waste comes under controls that impose a duty to ensure that waste is disposed of properly.
2. The number of fly-tipping incidents on Forest has, for many years followed the national trends and had fallen by 39.36% in the years 2011 to 2013. There has now been a 21% increase this year whilst the national average is still falling. The costs associated with the disposal of waste have however

increased each year in line with the government "Landfill Tax Escalator"., which rises by £8/net per year. This charge was introduced in 2007 at £48 tonne and has risen every year to the current level of £72 tonne.

3. There are widespread industry concerns that the Landfill Tax Escalator and increased restrictions on landfill disposal are encouraging less scrupulous companies to evade their responsibilities by fly-tipping. This is evidenced at Epping Forest by the increase in the number of larger commercial fly tips that are being dumped on the Forest.
4. In a bid to reduce the number of fly tips which occur, several measures are taken by Forest Keepers, in line with national advice, crime numbers are requested from the police for all fly tips. This is to help raise the profile of fly tipping in police crime figures. A prosecution is always taken forward if sufficient evidence or willing witnesses are available. A mobile CCTV camera has been purchased to try and catch some of the offenders and is being deployed at various sites where fly tips are known to commonly occur. Installation is carried out in accordance with the City Of London guidance under the DPA 1998 and the CCTV Code of Practice. The signage required under the code appears to have a similar effect to the actual presence of a camera. Also your Committee approved a reward scheme at your meeting of 12 May 2008.
5. As well as fly tipping a lot of waste is generated by visitors to the Forest, we currently have 65 litter bins across the Forest, mostly in, or close to, car parks. These are emptied as often as current resources allow. We also have a team of 10 litter pickers (6 full time equivalents) who pick litter in the Forest and on the roadsides where drivers discard large amounts of litter as they pass through the Forest.
6. The other major waste problem is the dumping of hazardous waste such as asbestos, tyres or unknown chemical and oils. These types of waste not only requires costly, specialist disposal but can have an environmental impact on the Forest.

Current Position

7. Since the 1960s, littering has increased by 500% according to 'Litterbugs', a recent Policy Exchange and Campaign to protect Rural England (CPRE) report. The latest Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) statistics show that in England there were 711,000 incidents of fly tipping in 2012/13. This represents a decrease of 4% from 2011/12. However, incidents of fly tipping on footpaths and bridleways has increased by 10%.
8. The Visitor Survey records that over three quarters of all visitors felt that standard of cleanliness and maintenance are Good or Excellent. However, of those reporting 9.8% raised nuisance concerns regarding litter.
9. At present four waste streams are employed in the disposal of the various types of waste that are deposited on the Forest. Litter and general waste is

taken by our own litter vehicle to the “London Waste” incinerator site. In the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 167.82 tonnes of waste was taken to the London Waste site at a cost of £24,023.52. **See Table 1 & 2 below**

10. Fly tips are dealt with in various ways depending on the size and content of the fly tip. Small fly tips are disposed of with the litter. Larger fly tips are either loaded onto a lorry and taken straight to London Waste or brought into the Warren yard and placed in skips. There were 666 fly tips recorded on Epping Forest during the period of this report. **See Table 3 below**
11. The skips are serviced by a waste disposal company Bywaters. There are also general waste skips at Jubilee Yard (Chingford Golf Course) and Aldersbrook Road changing rooms. During the period under report 102.64 tonnes of general waste has been disposed of through this waste stream at a cost of £12,132.54 **See Table 1 & 2 below**
12. Recycling is disposed of using enclosed skips which are also serviced by Bywaters; one is sited at the Warren and the other at Aldersbrook Road. The litter picker team and other members of staff separate out recycling. During the period under report 50.78 tonnes of recycling have been disposed of at a cost of £5,066.26 **See Table 1 & 2 below**
13. The disposal of hazardous waste requires specialist contractors to carry out legitimate disposal. There have been 15 fly tips containing hazardous waste (not tyres) in the period under report. These have been dealt with by City of London approved contractors at a cost of £7,216. Tyres are collected by Epping Forest staff and brought to the Warren where they are stored in a 35 cubic metre storage container. This is taken away by a waste disposal company when full. One full container has been taken away in the current year at a cost of £1,386.88.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. The removal of waste from Forest land supports the City Together Strategy theme ‘A World Class City which protects, promotes and enhances our environment. This is linked to the associated Open Spaces Strategic Aim “Provide safe, secure and accessible Open Spaces and services for the benefit of London and the Nation”.

Implications

15. **Finance:** The total cost of waste disposal in Epping Forest in 2013/14 amounted to £49,825.20. These costs are met in full from local risk.
16. The Conservators employ eleven members of staff to work specifically on litter collection, comprising one full time litter cart driver and 6 full time equivalent litter picking staff at an annual cost of £162,388.38 The Litter team are also assisted when necessary by the Forest Craftsman team with the removal of large or heavy fly tips.

17. The continued increase in littering across Epping Forest has prompted a review of current litter picking arrangements and litter bin provision.
18. The continued increase in littering across Epping Forest as outlined in recent national studies and echoed in local assessments and the level of public feedback has prompted a widespread review of the current litter picking arrangements and litter bin provision across the Forest.

Conclusion

19. With costs currently running at £212, 213.58, some 5% of the overall Epping Forest operating budget is currently focused on meeting the costs of waste management. Apart from the emptying of litter bins, the major of the cost is associated with addressing the poor and in many cases criminal behaviour of those visiting the Forest. On littering, visitor feedback indicates that more coordination across teams and with Local Authority partners is required, together with a further investment in staffing; enforcement and litter bin provision to reduce overall litter levels. A review of current litter services will be the subject of a further report to your Committee.
20. On fly tipping, staff continue to cooperate with Local Authority partners and Essex and Metropolitan Police Services on proposals to increase 'enviro-crime' detection and prosecution rates. In addition, staff at Epping Forest continue to implement National Fly Tipping Prevention Group's framework which includes guidance on using crime number collection; reward schemes and pilots using more sophisticated covert cameras to increase the number of successful prosecutions for fly tipping.

Table 1

<i>Month</i>	<i>London Waste</i>	<i>Bywaters Waste</i>	<i>Bywaters Recycling</i>	<i>Total tonnage</i>
April	9.98	9.54	4.00	23.52
May	13.14	8.98	5.00	27.12
June	26.72	9.78	4.00	40.5
July	17.64	5.34	5.00	27.98
August	15.82	5.78	2.00	23.6
September	13.30	11.5	4.28	29.08
October	10.94	10.08	4.00	25.02
November	11.84	3.88	4.00	19.72
December	10.24	6.48	5.50	22.22
January	10.48	16.1	4.00	30.58
February	13.68	4.48	3.00	21.16
March	14.04	10.7	6.00	30.74
	167.82	102.64	50.78	321.24
Tyre Skip				4.6
			Total tonnes	325.84

Table 2

<i>Month</i>	<i>London Waste £</i>	<i>Bywaters £ Waste</i>	<i>Bywaters £ Recycling</i>	<i>Total Month</i>
April	£1,844.70	£955.83	£385.36	£3,185.89
May	£1,830.51	£1,150.92	£481.70	£3,463.13
June	£3,912.57	£990.81	£385.36	£5,288.74
July	£2,401.98	£1,051.77	£578.40	£4,032.15
August	£2,316.84	£595.69	£137.82	£3,050.35
September	£1,959.51	£1,150.92	£385.38	£3,495.81
October	£1,558.32	£1,236.66	£385.40	£3,180.38
November	£1,159.56	£490.67	£416.20	£2,066.43
December	£1,590.57	£940.28	£561.72	£3,092.57
January	£1,381.59	£2,028.92	£416.20	£3,826.71
February	£1,906.62	£495.96	£422.57	£2,825.15
March	£2,160.75	£1,044.11	£510.15	£3,715.01
	£24,023.52	£12,132.54	£5,066.26	£41,222.32
			Tyre Skip	£1,386.88
			Asbestos	£7,216.00
			Total cost	£49,825.20

Table 3

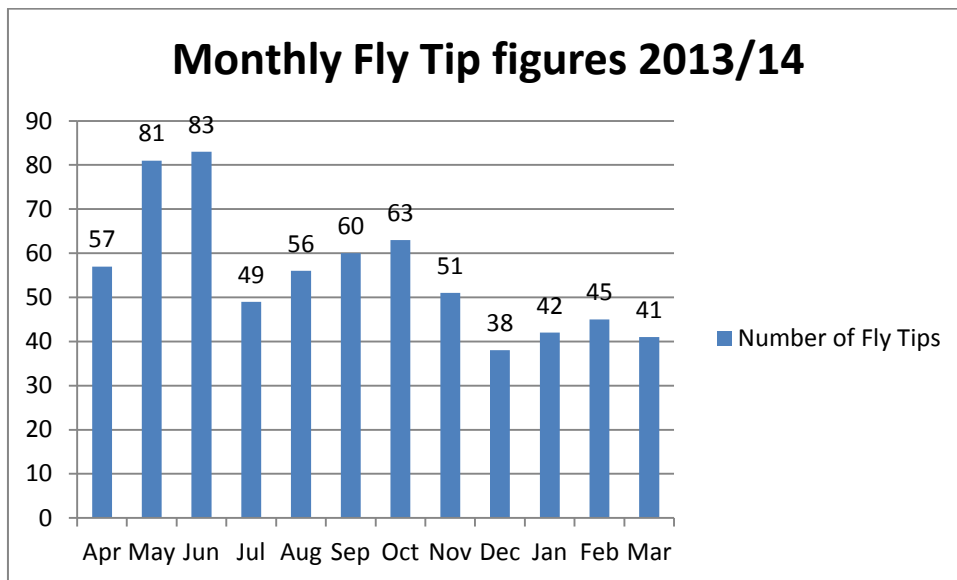
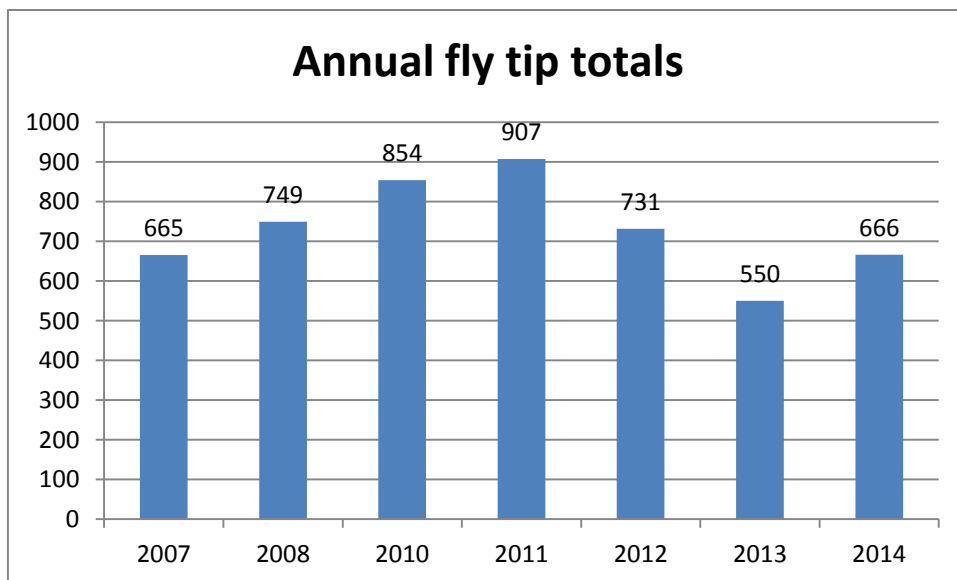


Table 4



Appendices

- None

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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject: Epping Forest Football Charges 2014/15	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 25/14	For Decision

Summary

This report reviews the charges for the sport facilities that are provided at Epping Forest, and seeks approval for the proposed charges for 2014/15.

The proposal is to increase the charge by 2.5% (3.5% for adults and 2.5% for juniors) and to hold the Sunday published tariff charges at current levels. The City has held Sunday prices for the past 5 years, while it has increased Saturday prices by 10% for the past 2 years. The Sunday price differential is now considered to be in balance. After 5 years of holding Sunday prices during the recession a moderate increase of 2.5%, which represents the current retail price index is considered proportionate.

Recommendations

- I recommend that the proposed charges for sports facilities in Epping Forest for 2014/15, as detailed in Appendix A be approved.
- The Superintendent retains delegated powers to discount or waive charges for trial periods in order to develop both new pitch configurations and off-peak and out-of-season use, and to help target underrepresented groups identified in the Sports Development Plan.
- The Superintendent retains delegated powers to revise the current sport charges terms and conditions and retain the deposit arrangement for clubs 'block booking' pitches in advance that was introduced four years ago.

Main Report

Background

1. Since 1890 the Conservators have at the request of the London Playing Fields Committee provided sports facilities at Wanstead Flats. Current provision now extends to 43 pitches and 3 sports pavilions over a 'footprint' of 150 acres of Wanstead Flats.
2. Charges for the wide range of sporting facilities that are provided in the City's Open Spaces are traditionally reviewed annually. The current charges for 2013/14 were approved by the appropriate service Committees in May 2013.

3. The current charging system had developed from the recommendations from two reviews of sports charging policy which have been undertaken over the last eleven years. In 2002, an internal review recommended that the approach to charges was standardised and better management information was provided. The review attempted to clarify what was meant by a 'consistent' pricing policy in relation to the sports facilities, although it was accepted that it would be unrealistic to have one charge for the same sporting activity irrespective of the area, as this would not take any account of local factors.
4. A further extensive review of the charging policy at Hampstead Heath and the other Open Spaces was carried out by consultants in 2005 to investigate whether further income generation could be achieved. The review established that there was still an inconsistent approach to pricing structures and the concessionary policy for some facilities at different sites, and several amendments to the charging policy were adopted. A further review of pricing is currently underway at Hampstead Heath. The ability to manage a pricing policy will be significantly improved once an online sports pitch booking system is delivered. This is currently being scoped by the IS division.
5. Sports Facilities at Epping Forest include Football Pitches at Wanstead Flats. The charging regime for The Royal Epping Golf Club, Chingford Men's and Chingford Ladies golf clubs and public play 18 Hole Golf Course at Chingford will be the subject of a separate report to your Committee.
6. Charges for Season 2013/14 saw a further 10% increase in the Saturday charges whilst the Sunday charges were unchanged. This decision was taken to bring the Saturday prices in line with the more expensive Sunday prices, whilst not being too unfair on the Saturday football players.
7. The overall cost for football charges was also increased during the last season by the removal of the higher block booking discounts which ranged from 5% to 15%.

Current Position

8. While the overall aim is to increase the income received from the sports facilities in the Open Spaces, it has been accepted that charges should aim to recover relevant costs as a minimum. For some activities, charges strive to maximise income but there is a controlled subsidy to promote the activity. Charges should also be related to the market price and local comparators, and the blend of options that has been adopted provides a flexible approach to charging that can be applied to each activity as appropriate.
9. The Sport Development Plan for Wanstead Flats prepared in partnership with the Football Foundation but not placed before this Committee has set ambitious targets for increasing participation in sport amongst under-represented groups.
10. Where concessionary charges apply, it had been agreed that they should generally be set at 50% of the full price for the facility and apply to young people under 17, students in full time education, older people aged 60 or over,

disabled people, unemployed people and schools/youth organisations, on production of the appropriate identification.

11. The Superintendent has previously received delegated authority to carry out trials for limited periods in order to encourage off-peak use, to see whether demand increases as a result of different charging arrangements and to closely monitor such trials, so that they can be halted if a beneficial outcome is not achieved. They have also been allowed to consider not charging for facilities at certain times, if the cost of supervising the facility is much higher than the income received.
12. The Football Association has recently published a new 3 year Pitch Strategy, which recognises the importance of publically managed football provision which accounts for 80% of all grassroots football matches.

Charging proposals for 2014/15

13. The overall charging policy has been taken into account when formulating the proposed sports charges for 2013/14, which are attached as Appendix A to this report.
14. Appendix B is a price comparison from local competitors and these prices have also been taken into consideration. The Superintendent will continue to monitor closely the usage of their sports facilities and the income received
15. The Superintendents continue to consult with local users and neighbouring boroughs about their local sports strategies to ensure that the objectives for sports provision in our Open Spaces are in line with local needs. The feasibility of extending concessionary charges to include specific local groups, and to offer other discounts, possibly in association with the local Boroughs, will continue to be considered in the future.
16. The Wanstead Flats Playing Fields Committee was consulted on Monday 16 March 2014 at the formal committee meeting and was supportive of the proposed changes.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. The provision of a wide range of sports facilities in the City's Open Spaces supports the following themes in the Community Strategy – A World Class City, A Healthy City, A Vibrant and Culturally Rich City, and An Inclusive and Outward Looking City.
18. The annual review of charges is also in line with the objectives in the departmental Business Plan.

Implications

19. **Legal** – Football play and facilities at Wanstead Flats are provided by virtue of Section 33(1)(xiii) of the Epping Forest Act 1878, which provides the Conservators with the power to “set apart in each or any of the Forest parishes, such parts as they think fit, for the use of the inhabitants to play at cricket and other sports, and to lay out, form and maintain, cricket grounds

and grounds for other sports, and, for the better use and enjoyment of the parts so set apart, to enter into agreements with, and confer special privileges on, particular clubs or schools”.

20. **Financial** - The City’s Financial Regulations require all departments to recover full costs when setting charges to persons or external organisations, or submit reason to the appropriate service Committee when that objective is not met. It is, therefore, at the discretion of individual spending Committees to determine the actual level of fees and charges relative to the services that provide, after taking into account local considerations and priorities.
21. The City’s budget management policy for 2014/15 assumes income will be at least the same as 2013/14. We have been informed that some sports clubs are either in financial hardship or are closing down due to economic reasons, however, the 5% increase will ensure that Wanstead Flats remains cheaper than many local competitors.
22. Any change to VAT has very little impact on income as over 90% of football played at Wanstead Flats is non-vatable.
23. The Conservators continue to apply a public subsidy to manage football at Wanstead Flats which in the year 2012/13 is estimated to cost to £135K.

Conclusion

24. The provision of football facilities at Wanstead Flats over the past 123 years has grown to provide facilities of pan-London importance which matches the total public pitch provision of some adjoining Local Authorities.
25. The careful pricing of football provision is necessary in order to secure the best possible levels of public park provision in football, while also maximising the use of Epping Forest’s sporting facilities. The continued level of subsidy required to match Local Authority financial support for pitch provision remains a major concern regarding the onward sustainability of the operation.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Pitch Hire Fee Allocation

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Appendix 1 –

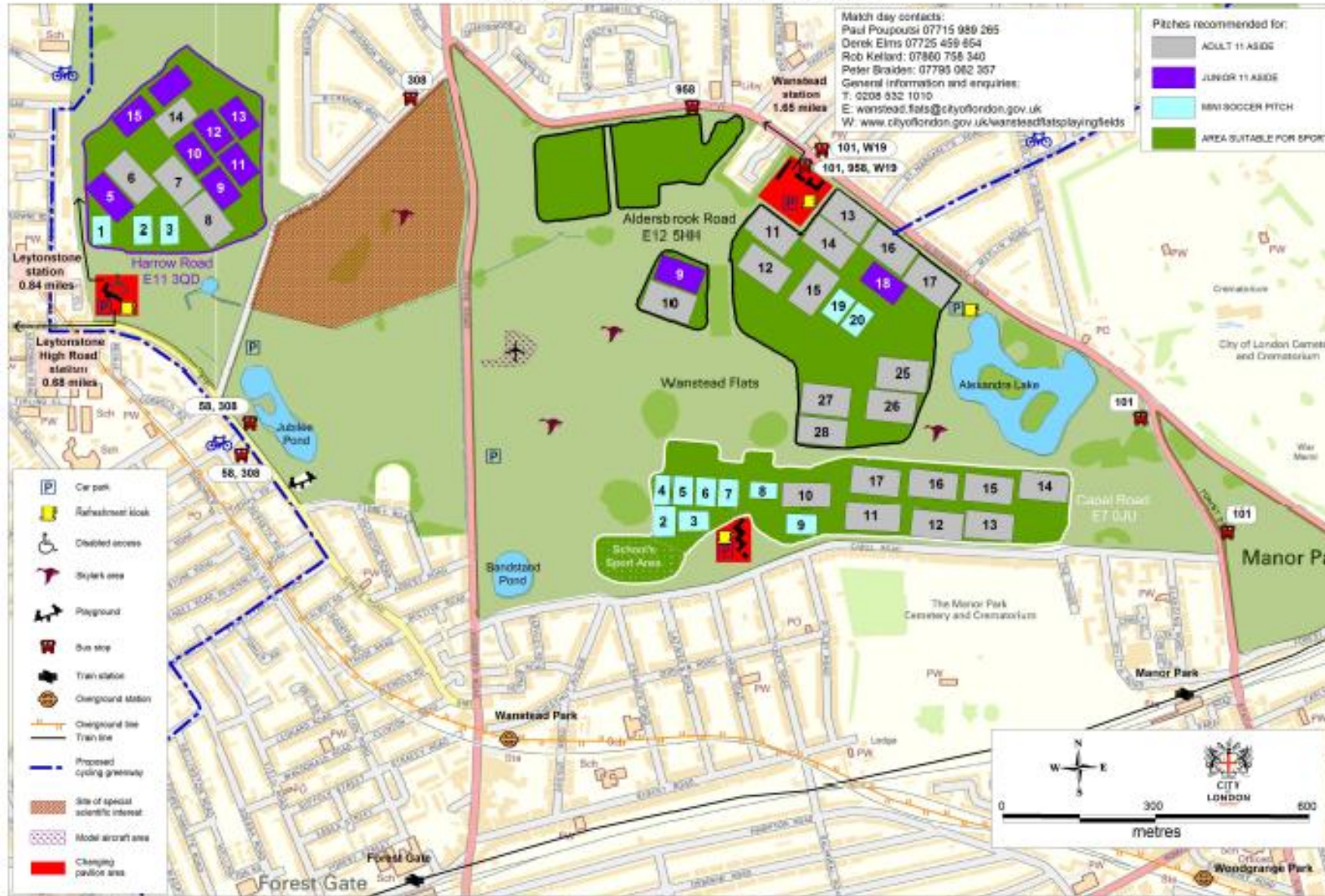
Wanstead Flats Playing Fields 2014/15 Pitch Hire Fee Comparison

Local Authority Provider	Games	Adult		Adult		Youth		Youth		Mini		Mini	
		Season Fee		Casual Fee		Season Fee		Casual Fee		Season Fee		Casual Fee	
		SAT	SUN	SAT	SUN	SAT	SUN	SAT	SUN	SAT	SUN	SAT	SUN
GLL (LB Hackney)	10	£485	£485	£84	£84	£385	£385	£55	£55	£285	£285	£35	£35
	<i>PPG</i>	£48.50	£48.50	x	x	£38.50	£38.50	x	x	£28.50	£28.50	x	x
LB Newham	13	£530 £635	£530 £635	£74 £86	£74 £86	£265 £320	£265 £320	£37 £44	£37 £44	x	x	x	x
<i>Resident Non-Res</i>	<i>PPG</i>	£41 £49	£41 £49	x	x	£20 £25	£20 £25	x	x	x	x	x	x
LB Waltham Forest	13	£775 £612	£910 £791	£83	£100	£387 £306	£455 £395	£42	£50	£160	£160	£16	£16
<i>Grade A Grade B</i>	<i>PPG</i>	£60 £47	£70 £61	x	x	£30 £23.50	£35 £30.50	x	x	£12.50	£12.50	x	x
LB Redbridge	13	£598	£840	£70	£80	£295	£420	£45	£55	£250	£350	£30	£30
	<i>PPG</i>	£46	£65	x	x	£23	£32	x	x	£20	£27	x	x
West Ham Park	16	£420	£598	£73	£73	x	x	£73	£73	x	x	£45	£45
	<i>PPG</i>	£26.25	£37.37	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Wanstead Flats	16	£484	£740	£66	£73	£231	£295	£41	£43	£215	£220	£31	£31.50
	<i>PPG</i>	£30.25	£46.25	x	x	£14.45	£18.43	x	x	£13.50	£13.75	x	x

Key

Highest Price
Lowest Price

Wanstead Flats Playing Fields 2014/2015



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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	7 July 2014
Subject:	Public
Revenue Outturn 2013/14 – Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common & City Commons	
Report of:	For Information
The Chamberlain and the Director of Open Spaces	

Summary

This report compares the revenue outturn for the services overseen by your Committee in 2013/14 with the final agreed budget for the year. In total, there was a better than budget position of £161,000 for the services overseen by your Committee compared with the final agreed budget for the year as set out below.

	Final Agreed Budget	Outturn	Increase/ (Decrease)
	£000	£000	£000
Local Risk			
Director of Open Spaces	1,603	1,534	(69)
City Surveyor	208	162	(46)
Recharges	418	372	(46)
Total	2,229	2,068	(161)

The Director's better than budget position of £69,000 (Local Risk) has been aggregated with budget variations on services overseen by other committees, which produces an overall better than budget position of £232,000 (Local Risk) across all Open Spaces. It is proposed to carry forward £217,000 of this underspend. These requests will be considered by the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Resource Allocation Sub Committee.

Underspends in The City Surveyor's Additional Works Programme will be available to spend in subsequent years of the scheme.

Recommendations

It is recommended that this revenue outturn report for 2013/14 and the consequential implications for the 2014/15 budget are noted.

Main Report

Budget Position for 2013/14

- The 2013/14 latest approved budget for the services overseen by your Committee received in November 2013 was £2.183m. This budget was endorsed by the Court of Common Council in March 2014 and subsequently updated for approved adjustments the majority of which was to allow for an increase in Recharges and an increase in funds associated with Planning & Consultancy.

Revenue Outturn 2013/14

- Actual net expenditure for your Committee's services during 2013/14 totalled £2.068m, an underspend of £161,000 compared with the final agreed budget.

A summary comparison with the final agreed budget for the year is tabulated below. In the tables, figures in brackets indicate income or in hand balances, increases in income or decreases in expenditure.

Summary Comparison of 2013/14 Revenue Outturn with Final Agreed Budget				
	Final Agreed Budget	Revenue Outturn	Variations Increase/ (Reduction)	Reason(s)
	£000	£000	£000	
Local Risk				
Burnham Beeches	461	459	(2)	
Stoke Common	19	14	(5)	
City Commons	1,123	1,061	(62)	3
Total Director of Open Spaces	1,603	1,534	(69)	
City Surveyor	77	57	(20)	
Additional Works Programme	131	105	(26)	
Total City Surveyor	208	162	(46)	
Total Local Risk	1,811	1,696	(115)	
Recharges				
Central Recharges	348	297	(51)	4
Recharges within funds	70	75	5	
Total Recharges	418	372	(46)	
NET EXPENDITURE	2,229	2,068	(161)	

Reasons for Significant Variations

3. The majority of the £62,000 underspend at City Commons within the Director of Open Spaces is due to an underspend of £24,000 in Rangers employee costs (Vacancies at West Wickham), an excess of £11,000 in income contributions the majority of which was a grant from SITA to restore a stand of small leaved lime (West Wickham), an £8,000 underspend in vehicle maintenance costs due to less breakdowns than anticipated (Ashted Common), and an underspend of £16,000 in minor improvements (delayed work re photovoltaic cells at Ashted Common). Part of the underspend was agreed to fund the over-wintering facility at Great Gregories, Epping Forest.
4. The majority of the £51,000 underspend in Central Recharges relate to Surveyor's Employee Recharges for West Wickham. Surveyor's Employee Recharges are allocated to the various areas of Epping Forest & Commons in proportion to works undertaken and less work was carried out at City Commons than anticipated.

Local Risk Carry Forward to 2014/15

5. Chief Officers can generally request underspends of up to 10% or £500,000 (whichever is the lesser) of the final agreed local risk budget to be carried forward, so long as the underspending is not fortuitous and the resources are required for a planned purpose. Such requests are subject to the approval of the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Resources Allocation Sub Committee.
6. The Director's better than budget position of £69,000 (Local Risk) has been aggregated with budget variations on services overseen by other committees which produce an overall better than budget position of £232,000 (Local Risk) of which £217,000 has been submitted for a carry forward as outlined below:
 - i) £44,000 towards refurbishment of St Brides, St Dunstan's in the East, & St Paul's Cathedral Garden.
 - ii) £89,000 (£60,000 vehicle purchase & £29,000 photovoltaic installation) at the Cemetery.
 - iii) £44,000 Great Gregories over-wintering facility at Epping Forest.
 - iv) £10,000 West Ham Park Nursery Business Plan.
 - v) £10,000 Feasibility Study – Parliament Hill.
 - vi) £20,000 New Signage – Hampstead Heath

7. The underspend in The City Surveyor's Additional Works Programme will be available to spend in subsequent years of the scheme.

Dr Peter Kane
Chamberlain

Sue Ireland
Director of Open Spaces

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